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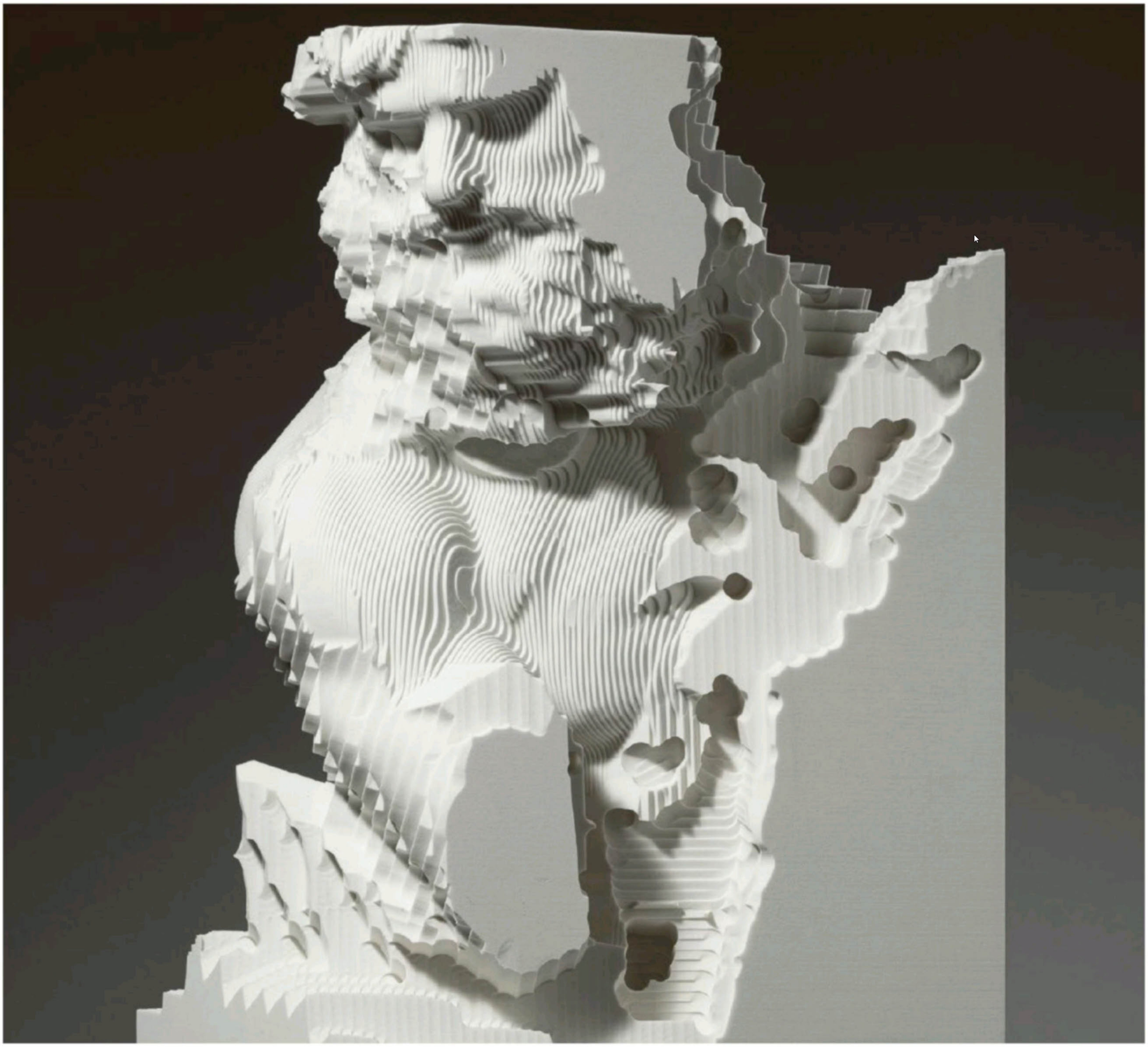


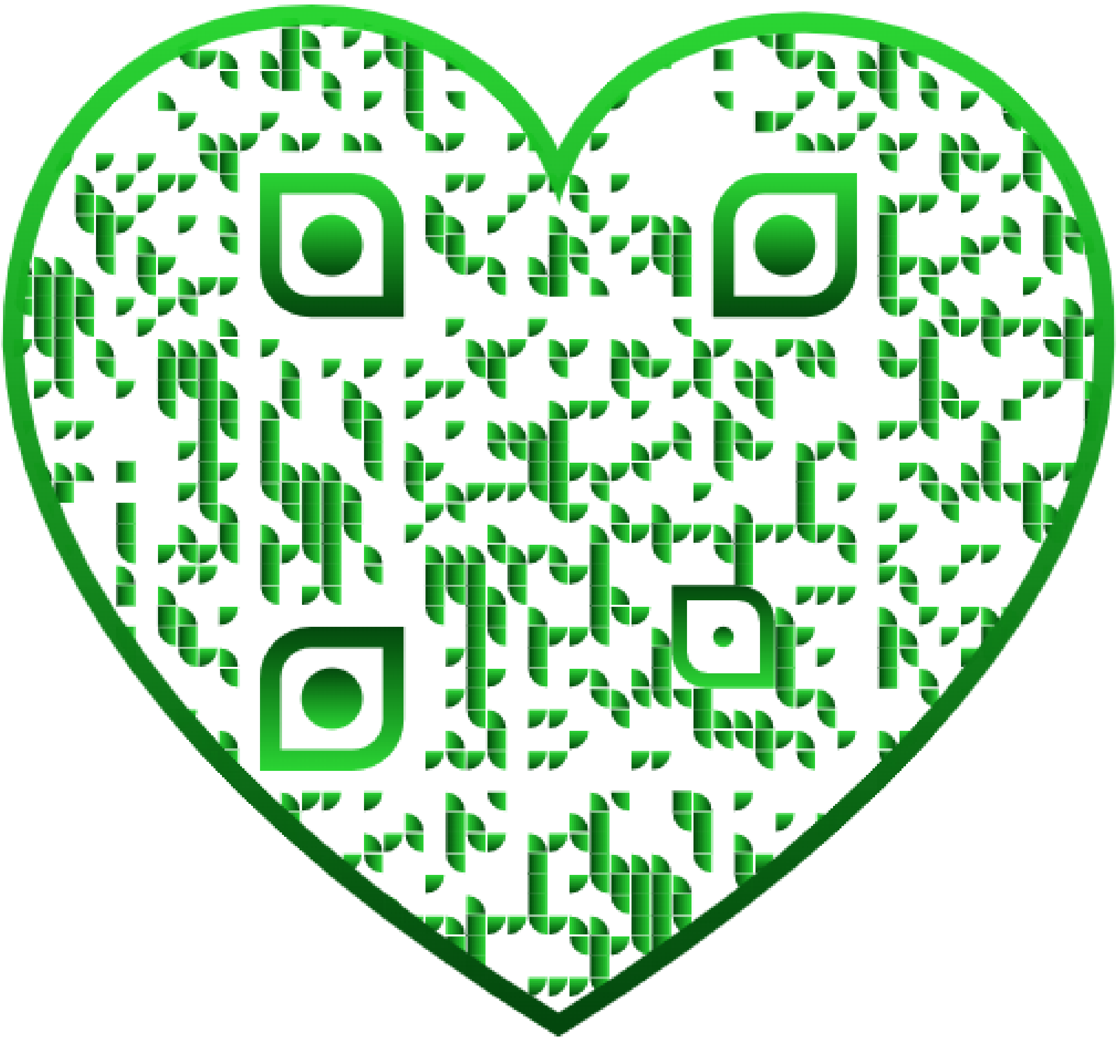
THE HERITAGE ISSUE

What we inherit, what we leave behind

ROBOTIC RENAISSANCE • Quayola's art as algorithmic poetry
BUCKET LIST • Eight Unesco heritage sites worth journeying for

LEGACY LENS • Annie Leibovitz's era-defying oeuvre
MEDINA MAGIC • Vanessa Branson's sensual boutique riad in Marrakech

RESTORERS OF NYC • The women fixing New York's most-loved old buildings
COUNT CLASS • Stay at Italy's Villa Sigurtà, a residence fit for nobility



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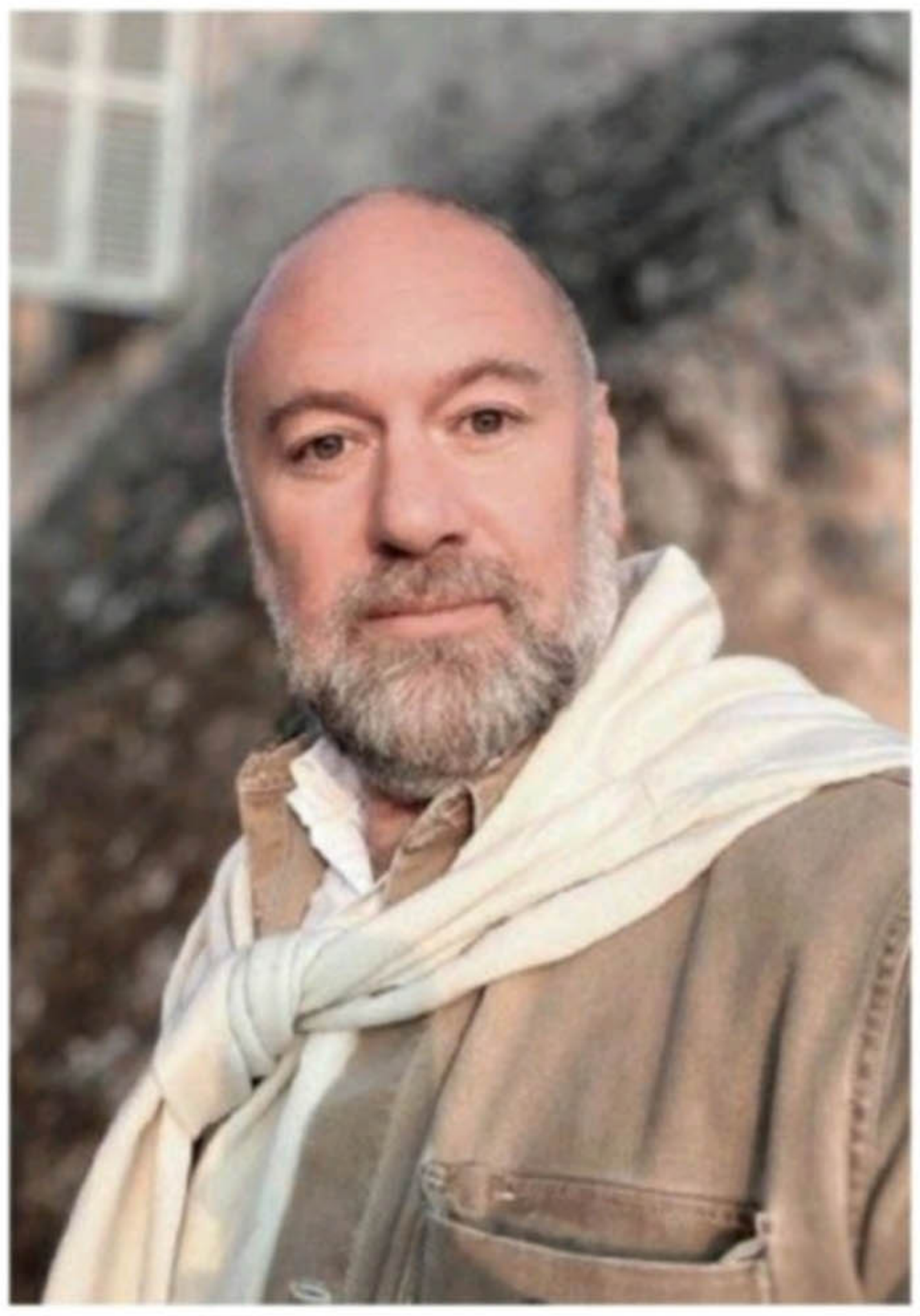
A WORD FROM THE PUBLISHER



My mother is English or at least thinks of herself as such. Her family name can be traced to Watling Street, which dates to the 1st century AD, Roman Britain, although it is thought only to have been named as such by the Anglo-Saxons in the 5th-6th century. Her family goes back through a vibrant and complex history: Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Vikings and then Normans.

This begs the question: just what is her heritage? Italo-Germanic-Franco-Danish-Anglo? Or is there some cut-off beyond where we don't consider it someone's heritage any more, just their DNA?

My father's family on the other hand, we can trace back a mere 500 years. It is predominately French-English until the last 200 years in Africa where it becomes a mad mix of everything European, but not African.

And then there is me. A combination of long lines of very humble European ancestors but born at the tip of Africa. So, what exactly is my heritage? Just how far back does it go before it becomes irrelevant in this social construct? Do I then simply cherry pick what I prefer and would have others know? Do I go with what somehow makes sense to me?

I left Africa at 18 and never returned to live in the country I was born in. Instead, I have called many places home, from Austria to Andorra, the UK to Singapore and Spain. And without question these places have had a greater influence on me over the last 30-plus years.

And yet I feel decidedly South African in so many ways. My children describe themselves as being Spanish-South African but that leaves out the English in me, which is also in them.

The only conclusion I can draw is that I am human. My heritage is vast and complex and deeply human — the good, the bad and the downright ugly. My ancestors and I come from here, this planet. And I recognise there is much in my family's past that I would prefer not to have as my heritage, in particular certain societal and political norms, the oppression, whether of women, people of a different colour or of a different religion or simply different, no matter which way.

There is much I am not proud of and yet it makes me who I am. And that would suggest that we cannot erase what has gone before — our heritage — but we can choose a very different path to lead from.

David

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EDITOR'S NOTE

From our first breath, heritage is integral to us, the invisible code we inherit and transmit to future generations, an identity keystone that informs our choices consciously and subliminally.

As a two-time expatriate, I have a deep appreciation for both my own heritage, which anchors me to my British roots, as well as the native heritage of Hong Kong and the United States, which I consider now imprinted onto my family's cultural identity. I feel all the richer for it.

In Billionaire's first Heritage issue, we explore the importance of heritage preservation, in conversation with Annie Leibovitz, a photographer who delights in the dissection and engagement with her heritage and that of others, as we find out in our interview (p98).

Fittingly on our cover is the work of Davide Quayola, an Italian artist who explores the tension between heritage and modernity by reinterpreting classical art forms through contemporary digital and robotic technology (p106).

Restoring architectural heritage can be painstaking, as we discover from two female experts pioneering these skills, preserving some of New York's most important buildings, including the city's monumental Public Library, the Guggenheim Museum, Park Avenue Armory and Palace Theatre on Broadway (p44).

Our theme brings us to Morocco, where Vanessa Branson, hotelier, author and founder of Marrakech Biennale, shows us around her boutique riad hotel El Fenn, in Marrakech's historic medina (p72). Meanwhile in Oaxaca, Mexico, artist Bosco Sodi describes how he twisted the arm of Japanese starchitect Tadao Ando to create Casa Wabi, a stunning non-profit arts centre seeking to promote cultural exchange between artists and communities (p34).

For your travel bucket list this issue we spotlight eight Unesco World Heritage sites not to be missed, as identified by serial nomad and bon vivant Anthony Lassman (p62).

Finally, mothers are possibly the most profound symbol of heritage. They are the primary keepers and transmitters of culture, language, traditions, and values from one generation to the next — and it is with pleasure we profile the important work of HIV charity Mothers to Mothers, in this issue's NGO in the Spotlight (p28).

We hope you enjoy the issue.

Tara Loader Wilkinson

Tara Loader Wilkinson
Editor-In-Chief

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CONTENTS

16
Living Heritage
Broughton Hall in Yorkshire is an example of heritage translated to modern times.

18
Opinions
Each issue we ask three thought leaders the same question. This time: what do you love about your city?

19
Destination: Tinajani, Peru
A soulful glamping retreat between Cusco and Lake Titicaca, for a proper switch-off in total luxury.

20
The Weekender: South Africa
Our publisher and his children embark upon an adventure to reflect on life's journey.

26
Five Minutes With... Kevin Balmforth
We catch up with the Glasgow-based Master Blender and Glenlivet Cask Master.

28
NGO In the Spotlight: Mothers to Mothers
Each issue we profile a new, innovative NGO seeking funding. This issue, Mothers to Mothers.

34
Wabi-Sabi Wisdom
Mexican artist Bosco Sodi's foundation works to support his young contemporaries.

44
Restorers of NYC
Meet the women bringing New York's historic landmarks back to life.

52
Fostering The Arts
Ben Dobbin of Foster + Partners appreciates the weight of architectural legacy.

62
Ideal Worlds
Eight of the best Unesco World Heritage Sites for adventurous exploration.

72
Far From The Madding Crowd
Two pioneering women are redefining the Marrakech travel experience with boutique hotels.

80
The Best is History
Villa Sigurtà, Italy, has inspired dignitaries and royalty down the centuries.

88
Creation Story
The Algarve's Vila Joya is more than just a food and wine connoisseurs' dream.

98
The Living Image
US photographer Annie Leibovitz looks back on half a century behind the lens.

106
Hellenic Hybrid
At the nexus of art and technology, Davide Quayola wields the machine as a potent artistic medium.

114
Botanical Alchemy
Artist Shota Suzuki turns the art of metalsmithing into the most delicate of floral crafts.

120
Moments in Love
Guerlain's intense relationship with art and artists has been part of its story since 1828.

128
Golden Era Glamour
A century on from the birth of the Art Deco era, a look at the hotels embodying 'The Jazz Age.'

136
Effervescent Energy
Celebrating a decade since Champagne was awarded Unesco World Heritage status.

142
Flavour At Full Volume
Le Doyenné exemplifies a philosophy of 'from wheelbarrow to plate.'

148
My Favourite Things: Calvin Hui
The Hong Kong-based gallerist shares his favourite objects.

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Living Heritage

Broughton Hall in Yorkshire, England, is an example of heritage translated to modern times with meaning and care.

by Roger Tempest

When you inherit nine centuries of history, you take on a significant duty. A heritage estate comes with expectation and responsibility.

I inherited Broughton Hall and Estate as a seven-year-old boy — the 32nd generation of my family to do so. My ancestors arrived in the 11th century with William, Duke of Normandy, and were granted this parcel of land in a quiet corner of Yorkshire. For over nine centuries, the Tempests have featured in many of history's great turning points: we rode at Agincourt with Henry V, we suffered as Catholic recusants. My grandfather fell at the Somme; my father was shot in the head in the Second World War. The fact that I came to hold this baton of responsibility was, in many ways, a miracle.

Yet when I inherited in 1972, Broughton was on its last legs. Snow drifted onto the billiard table through a hole in the roof, and one went to bed with a dog just to keep warm. Ninety per cent wealth taxes tore apart the fabric of our community. We had no income, no prospects. It felt very heavy to be the last Tempest of Broughton, managing what looked like terminal decline.

However, decline is not the only inheritance. My mother, who worked all her life alongside Mother Teresa, instilled in her five children the belief that what matters most is not what we receive, but what we give. I was inspired by the words: "God gave us the gift of life and what we become is our gift to God."

Many who inherit great houses feel crushed by the weight of ancestors staring down from gilt frames. I was perhaps fortunate to be young enough to see it differently. I understood that Broughton would only survive if I developed the responsibility to meet the circumstances I faced.

Our first breakthrough came with Margaret Thatcher's call to entrepreneurship. With over 30 derelict buildings, we took a risk, renovating and creating office space. Slowly but surely tenants arrived. As rents grew, so did possibilities. A community reawakened: the milk round returned, the pub grew busier, shops reopened. Today, more than 700 people work where silence once lingered.

That spirit of regeneration grew beyond Broughton. I founded Rural Solutions to help other landowners on similar journeys. Heritage was no longer just about the past. It became about vision — a future rooted in resilience, responsibility, and renewal.

The last decade, we have embraced a new identity: Broughton Sanctuary. What began as restoration is now transformation. Traditional farming has given way to ecological recovery and holistic wellbeing. Over 330,000 native trees have been planted, wetlands restored, wildlife welcomed back. Two thousand acres once locked in monoculture are becoming a living mosaic of biodiversity — one of the UK's most ambitious nature recovery projects. With my wife Paris, we built Avalon Wellbeing, a light centre dedicated to personal growth, healing, and raising consciousness through diverse practices.

That is the story of Broughton Sanctuary — 900 years of continuity, and today, a living invitation to transformation. In the end it is perseverance and purpose that matter; that is how heritage not only survives but serves the future. Privilege means little without responsibility, and that is the greatest lesson I carry forward. ◇

Roger Tempest is the 32nd custodian of Broughton Hall.

Broughton Sanctuary in the evening light.

OPINIONS

Each issue we ask three thought leaders the same question.
This time: what do you love most about the city you live in?

Martin Öfner

What I like about Singapore is how easy it makes life. The trains run on time, the streets are spotless, and the suppliers show up when they say they will. For someone in this business, the food is also incredible. The hawker markets are unmissable, with my favourite dishes being the moonlight kway teow and the butter cereal prawns.

I occasionally treat myself to a bolo bun. It reminds me of my time in Guangzhou, a distinctly Cantonese treat that's incredibly satisfying. I love Champion Bolo on Tanjong Pagar Road for their classic: a warm, choux crackling-topped bun with a generous slice of salted butter inside.

What seals it for me, though, is the location — Tokyo, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Bali — all just a short flight away. For someone who lives and breathes food and travel, that's gold. You can step into another city, another culture, another kitchen, and be back in time for service the next day.

Martin Öfner is the executive chef at three-Michelin-starred Zén in Singapore.

Beanie Espey

I don't just live in London — I grew up here. I've been lucky to live in some wonderful places, including Cape Town, Jerez de la Frontera and Hong Kong, but the lure of home has always been strong and, thankfully, my Dutch husband agrees that London is irresistible.

We live in Wimbledon, where, during the summer the village, with its Sunday market and riding stables complete with Shetland ponies, is festooned with purple and white flowers, buzzing with excitement; the many pubs spilling their patrons onto the pavement, clutching their glasses of Pimm's. But it's the city's historic past that captivates my imagination the most. From the creaky floors of Berry Bros & Rudd's 1698 shop in St James's, moments from Green Park — a jewel, with its swans and tulips and glimpses of Buckingham Palace — to the magnificent Guildhall, with over 800 years of history at the heart of the City of London.

Luxury drinks veteran Beanie Espey is managing director of the fundraising arm of The Distillers Charity.

Rebecca Buchan

What I love most about Salt Lake City is how the natural landscape defines both the rhythm of life and the spirit of the community. I live and work in the suburbs of Holladay, where tree-lined streets open to long views of the Wasatch mountains, and there is a sense of calm that feels worlds away — downtown's culture and energy are minutes from my door.

That balance is rare: you can hike Bells Canyon Trail at sunrise, be at the office by 8am, and catch a Utah Jazz game at the Delta Center that night. In every season, the city makes it effortless to toggle between focus and freedom.

It's a city that is built with the landscape, not against it. Ultimately, Salt Lake is more than a backdrop. It's a daily reminder that the best places make you feel grounded and connected at once: close to nature, close to neighbours, and close to opportunity. Salt Lake is a city that lets you breathe and think big. It serves as a clear example of why thoughtful, land-led communities matter.

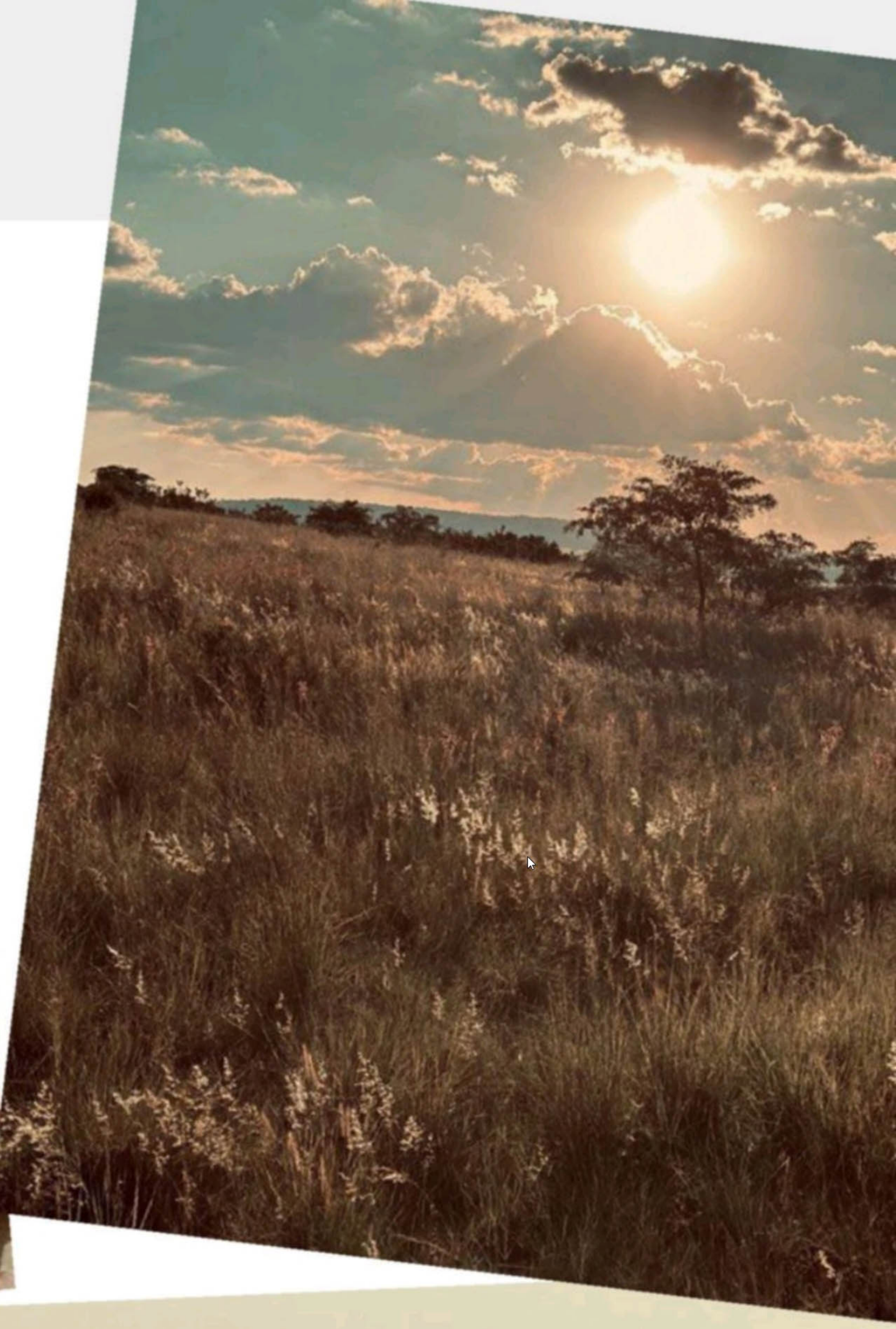
Rebecca Buchan is the co-founder and chief executive of Areté Collective, a real-estate developer.

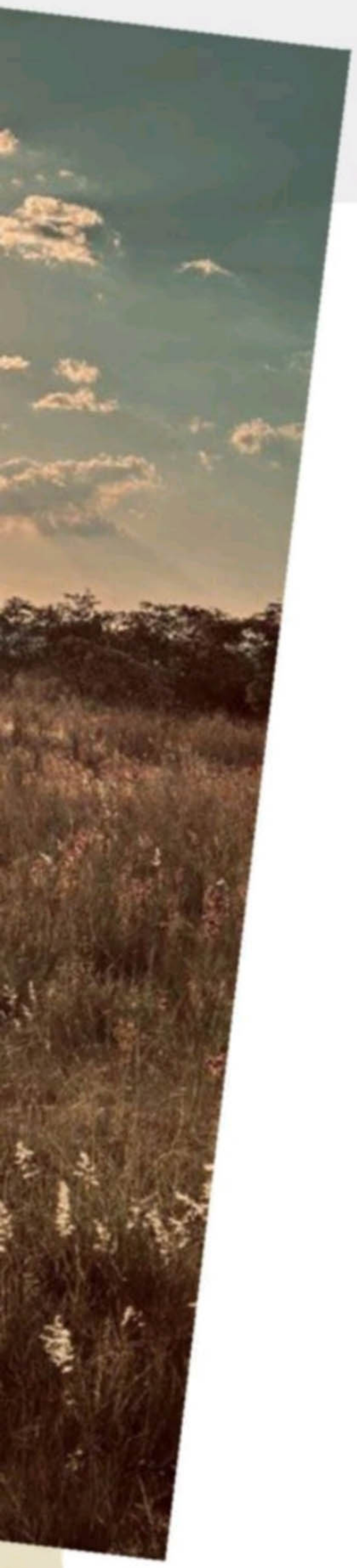
Tinajani, Peru

In a vast, otherworldly canyon, between Cusco and Lake Titicaca, Tinajani is a soulful base camp for highland adventure, cultural connection, and low-impact living. Originally a 19th century sheep farm, the secluded outpost set on 400 untouched acres has been renewed into a private conservation area and tented property, where guests can hike among towering rock spires, share stories at the "Galpón" or by the fire, and experience the traditions of the Altiplano with intention and intimacy.

Scattered beyond the central hamlet are six new "campamentos", designed by Andean in 2025. Built on stilts to minimise environmental impact, each tented suite includes a bedroom and a separate lounge, furnished with Peruvian cotton bedding, alpaca throws, lambswool rugs, and a wood-burning stove. Private decks, complete with open-air hot tubs, offer a quiet vantage point for stargazing or reflection after a day in the elements.

www.tinajani.pe





Clockwise from top left: Cloudbreak, a farmhouse in Cape Town. Late afternoon, Waterberg. A thriving rhino population. Open roads. Right: David Leppan goes back to school, Broadlands.

South Africa

The Weekender

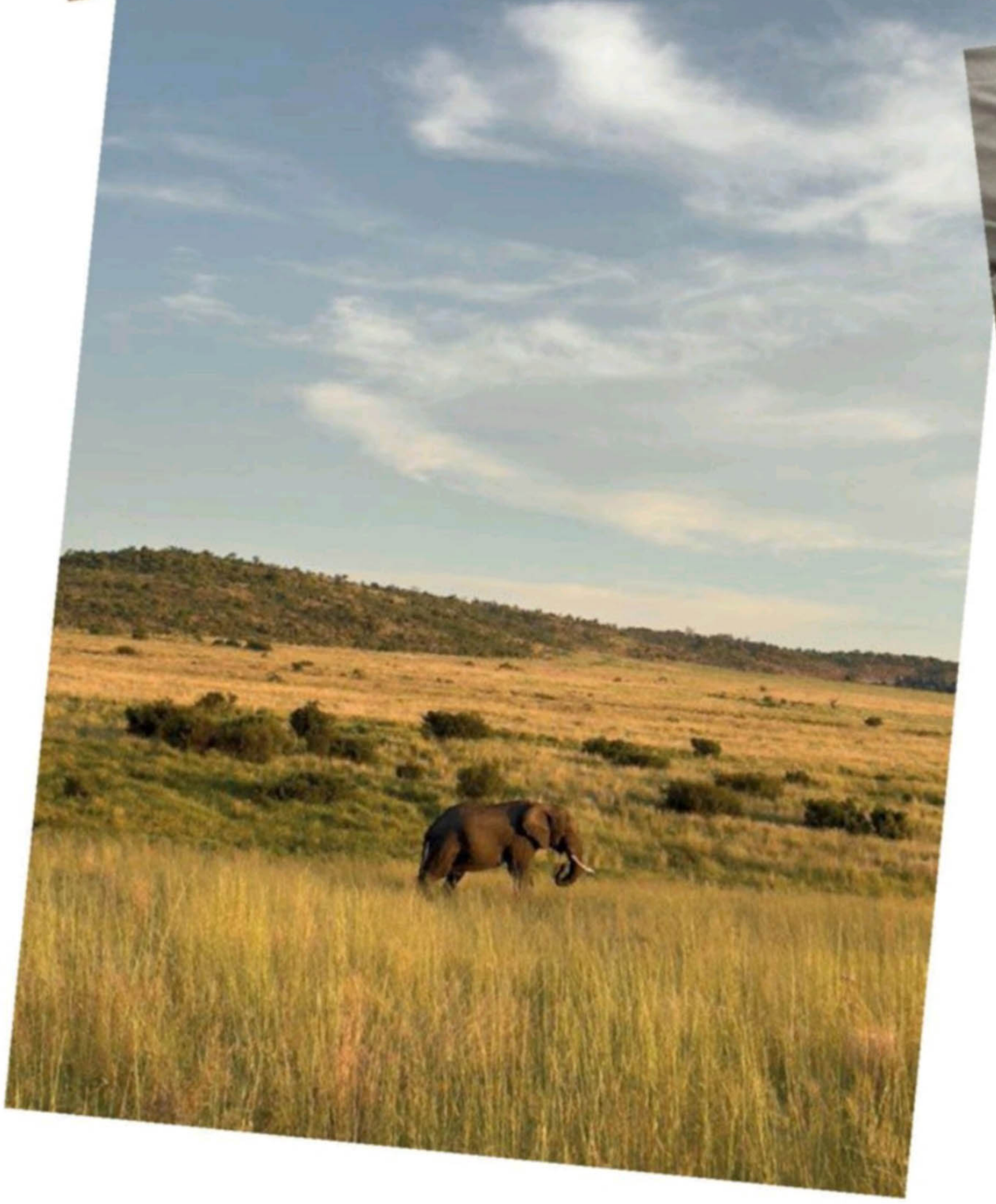
Our publisher and his children embark upon an adventure to reflect on life's journey.

Words and photography by David Leppan

This trip was going to be more than just a weekender. My children, all three of them, would be travelling with me to South Africa, the country I was born in and that I had left at the age of 18 to move to Europe. They wanted to better understand where I came from and the journey I've taken to where I am now. I was more than happy to oblige and certain that, as the days went by, they would never look at me again in quite the same way.

We spent almost no time in Johannesburg and instead went 'back to school.' I grew up, from the age of five, far from the city, in a rural setting as a boarder. The start to this trip down memory lane was eye-opening for them and I found myself very moved to be in a place I had known as a child, accompanied now by my own children. Little had changed, which I suspect is what made it even more impactful.

I can't visit Johannesburg without grabbing a meal at Tasha's, my go-to-place for a great vibe and delicious food served by people with smiles and big hearts. I am forever grateful for the generosity of Jason and to Dimitri for having introduced us 30-plus years ago. Dinner was at Marble with our first African sunset and some of the finest wines, courtesy as always of Deby and Dimitri, people who are more than family to me.



Clockwise from top left: David Leppan and his three children. Going down the mines, Gold Reef City. Sterrekopj Farm, Franschoek.Let sleeping cheetahs lie. African giant, Waterberg.

The next morning, we spent an hour, 75m below ground, in a former gold mine, so that my children could experience for a moment how my paternal grandfather had started out in life. It was a sobering descent into what must have been a hellish environment in the 1920s. And then, no sooner had we ascended, we were off on a long drive to the Waterberg, to spend a few days on safari.

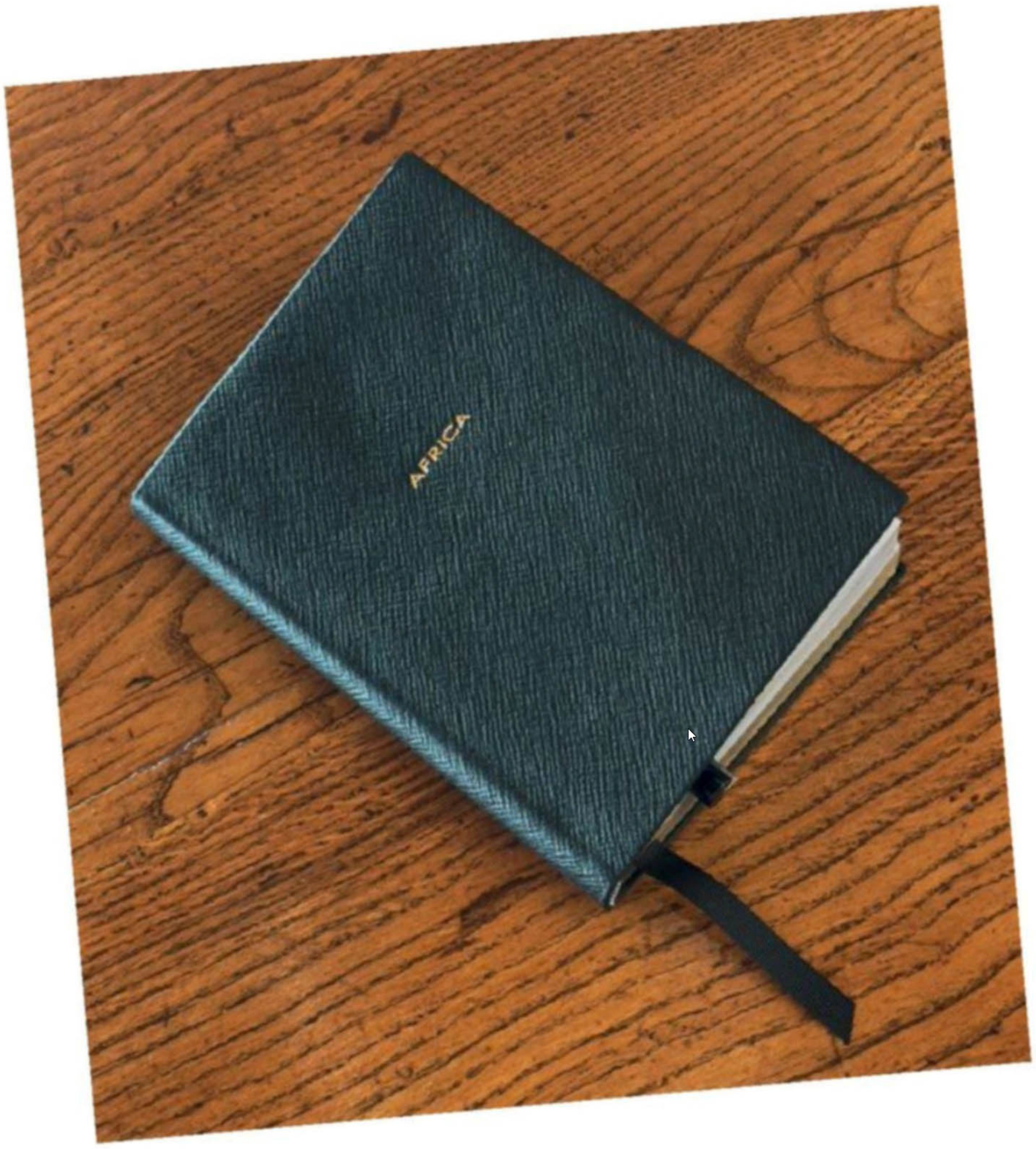
We are animals and being immersed in nature and surrounded by predators brings out an ancient instinct in us: hunter but also hunted! There is nothing comparable and it is impossible not to marvel at it all. What strikes me every time is the vastness of Africa, something I miss in Europe. From this private farm we chartered a plane to fly to Cape Town, a distance of over 1,600km.

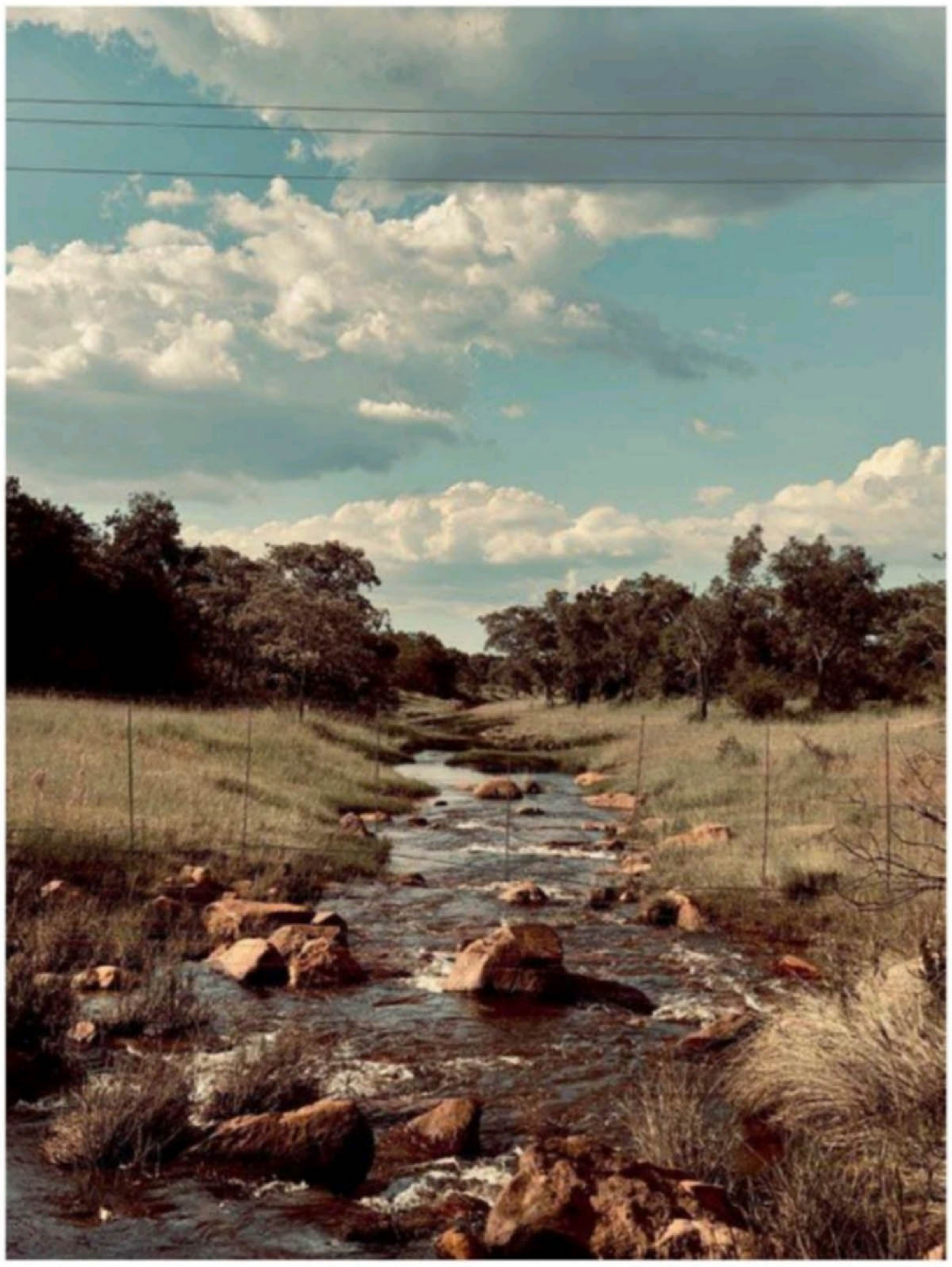
Having struggled to find hotel accommodation in Cape Town that was suitable for us, I turned to my dear friend Chanti who recommended an agency, Perfect Hideaways, that manages some of the most impressive homes in and around the city. By sheer coincidence the home we chose happened to belong to someone I'd met on the Kings Road, London, years earlier. There are not enough words to describe how enchanting Cloudbreak is. We dined with gusto at Between Us, one of my regulars when in town, and at ELGR, which were both excellent.

Having celebrated my father's birthday with family members, the children and I departed Cape Town and en route to Franschhoek for the final leg of our journey stopped off at a cheetah sanctuary, thereby adding one more remarkable African species to our growing list.

Having celebrated my father's birthday with family members, the children and I departed Cape Town and en route to Franschhoek for the final leg of our journey stopped off at a cheetah sanctuary, thereby adding one more remarkable African species to our growing list.

> *We truly had saved the best for last: Sterrekopje. A biodiverse farm nestled between the mountains and surrounded by vineyards. This is a place to unwind, recharge and recuperate.*

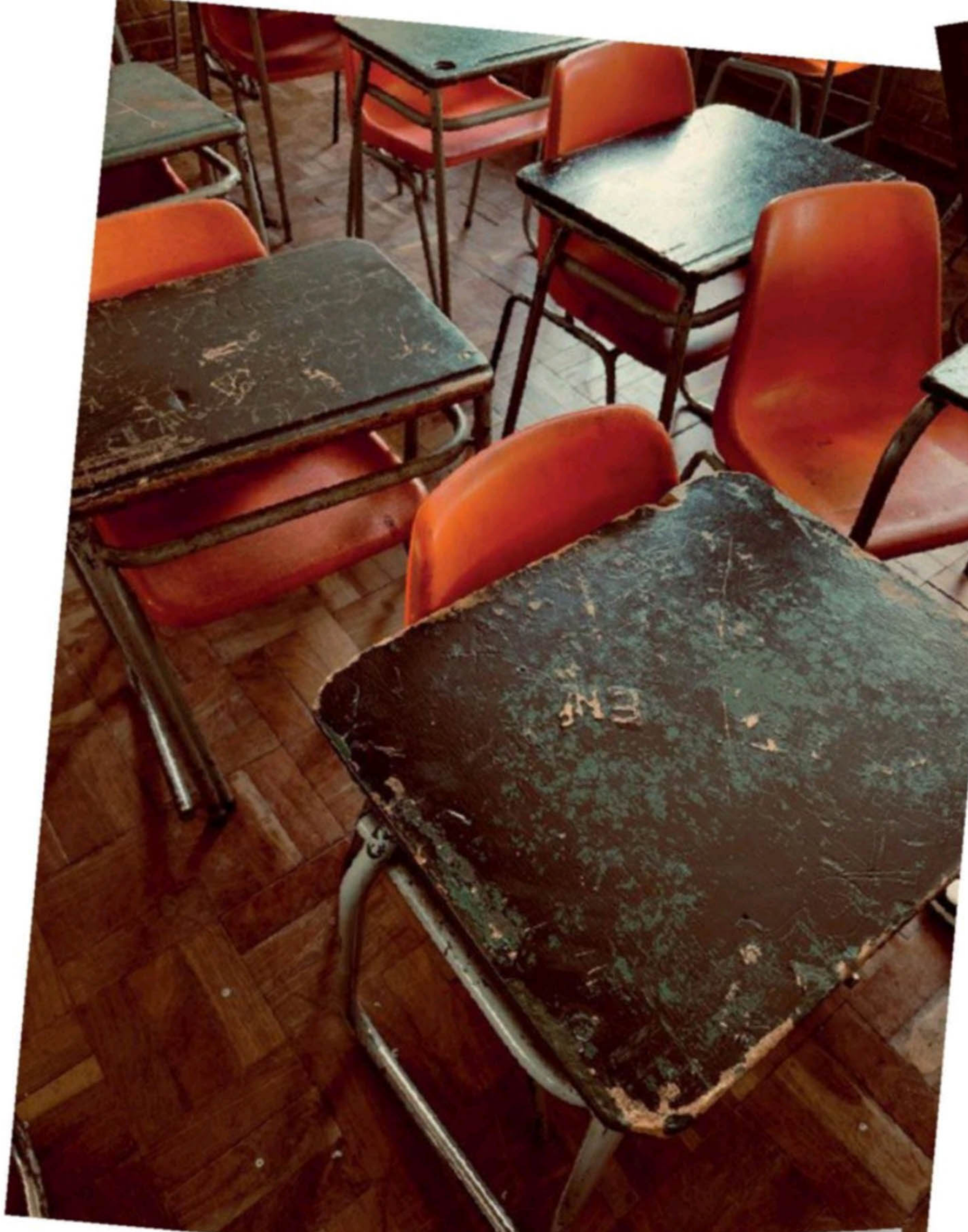




We truly had saved the best for last: Sterrekopje. A biodiverse farm nestled between the mountains and surrounded by vineyards. This is a place to unwind, recharge and recuperate. The staff have been as carefully selected as the artwork throughout the property, the plants throughout remarkable gardens and the approach to wellness. The bedrooms were exquisite, the food prepared specifically for us at each meal was delicious, and the farm gave us an opportunity to gather our thoughts and impressions from one of the most important journeys we have been on together.

There are few places like Sterrekopje and few countries like South Africa. I am grateful for the journey I am on and the one we took together. ◇

Clockwise from top left: Taking note, Smythson. Desks at Athlone Boys High School, Johannesburg. Anchovies on toast at ELGR. Sofia, strumming. Poached guavas, a childhood favourite snack. A stream, Waterberg.



LUC
BEAU

Five Minutes With…
Kevin Balmforth

LONGMORN
DISTILLERY
1994

Glasgow-based Kevin Balmforth has worked at Chivas Brothers for 26 years, most recently as Chival Regal blender and cask expert. Last year's release of Longmorn's ultimate expression, the 30-Year-Old, was a highlight of which he was very proud, having overseen almost all of its maturation. "It's been a great privilege to oversee this very special single malt," he says.

We catch up with the spice-loving foodie gamer for a quick fire Q&A.

What is your morning routine?
I don't function without a decent English breakfast tea, which I enjoy while reading the news. I am always the first to arrive at work at our blending room in Glasgow around 7am, the team is in shortly after. The first thing we do is set all the morning whisky samples for nosing; it can be anything up to 70-80 samples of whisky from across our Chivas Brothers portfolio. Is there a more perfect start to a day?

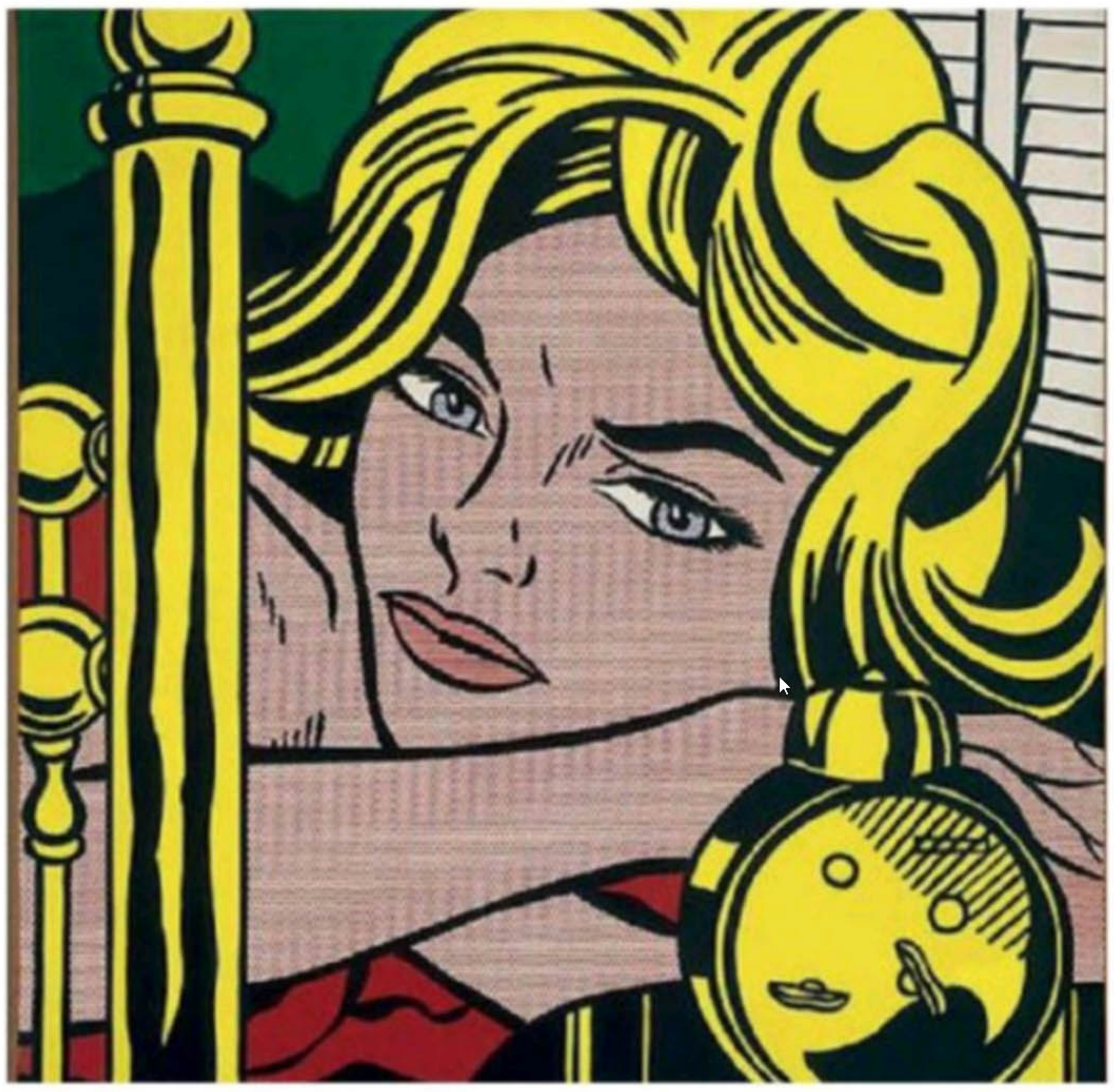
Clockwise from top: Kevin Balmforth nosing some whisky. He swears by his Big Green Egg Grill. Favourite condiments include Goose Siracha Hot Sauce. Marmite on toast is a guilty pleasure. Roy Lichtenstein would be his artist of choice. St Supéry Estate Vineyard in Napa Valley.

What would we always find in your fridge?
I am partial to a bit of spice so I stock up on fresh chillies and jalapenos, as well as condiments such as Flying Goose Sriracha Hot Sauce and sauces and oils by The Woolf's Kitchen. You will also always find mayonnaise. Everything tastes better with mayonnaise.

What was your best ever trip, and why?
We had an incredible family trip to California. We visited St Supéry Estate winery, the Merryvale Vineyards in Napa Valley where the wine was some of the best I have ever tasted. We drove along the Big Sur coastline and stopped for a wonderful lunch at Sierra Mar, the restaurant at the Post Ranch Inn perched on the rocky dramatic cliffs.

What is your favourite restaurant and why and what do you order?
Mother India in Glasgow's West End. I can't see past the lamb saag.

If you weren't a caskmaster at Longmorn, what would you be doing?
A chef, although I prefer the deadlines in the whisky industry.



Who was or is your greatest inspiration?
One of the top blenders when I joined Chivas Brothers back in 1999 was a guy called Abby Stephens, not well known outside the industry but he had incredible sensory abilities and was a just person that everyone liked and enjoyed being around: a gentleman and true master.

What is your ultimate meal?
It would be a barbecue, albeit a boujie one. I confess I am a foodie and I have a barbeque that can also slow cook. I like the whole experience around cooking on fire. I also like to throw in our used whisky bungs; a couple of those give a beautiful scotch whisky smoke-infused flavour.

What is your guilty pleasure?
Noodles or Marmite on Scottish toast hits the spot.

What was the last book you read?
Reaper by Will Wight from the Cradle series. It's space fantasy and I love it.

What is the key to happiness for you?
Accept you can't fix every problem or answer every question.

How do you incorporate relaxation into your week?
I'm very into gaming. I enjoy my PS5.

Which artist would you buy if money was no object?
Roy Lichtenstein.

What is the best piece of advice you've been given?
Start running. There are lots of benefits. For me, a big motivation is to inspire my children. ◇

Mothers To Mothers

Each issue we shine a light on a worthy not-for-profit in need of support.

by Ilda Kuleba

Mothers to Mothers is an African not-for-profit organisation that employs women living with HIV as community health workers in about a dozen African countries. These women serve other women, children and families in their community with quality, compassionate health services. Since 2001, it has reached over 16 million people, helped to keep more than three million at-risk women and children alive, and created more than 12,000 jobs for African women living with HIV.

The year 2025 has proven a watershed for non-profits, following the dramatic shake-up in international funding for global health. Governments in the Global North — previously stalwarts of funding for these issues — are drastically cutting back overseas aid development funding to focus on domestic issues and defence. At least five countries (the US, the UK, France, Germany and the Netherlands), which together provide more than 90 per cent of global funding to fight HIV, have announced plans

Opposite page: A Mentor Mother and one of her youngest patients in South Africa (c) m2m / Karin Schermbrucker

This page from top: Three Mentor Mothers—local women living with HIV, trained and employed as health workers—in Malawi (c) m2/m / Keli Van Der Weijde. A Mentor Mother in Malawi shares a moment with a family (c) m2m / Keli Van Der Weijde. Ilda Kuleba, Africa Director at Mothers To Mothers (c) m2m

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to implement significant cuts to foreign aid, generally between 8 and 70 per cent between 2025 and 2026. As a result, countless life-saving health services and treatments for vulnerable people are disappearing.

Mothers to Mothers' response has been to launch an initiative called "Can't Stop, Won't Stop", which educates people about the impact of the cuts and seeks to strike new partnerships, especially with philanthropists and corporate partners.

Ilda Kuleba, Africa director of Mothers to Mothers, says: "We pioneered and scaled a unique model known as the 'Mentor Mother Model'. It flips the script on how healthcare is delivered and what it means to be an African woman living with HIV."

Mothers to Mothers employs, trains, and supports African women living with HIV as community health workers. Working from health clinics and door-to-door in communities, these 'Mentor Mothers' make sure other women and their families get a range of primary health care services, spanning HIV, TB, malaria, cervical cancer and other common conditions. As well as delivering health outcomes, this model also creates economic opportunity for the women who work as Mentor Mothers, who may otherwise have been excluded or marginalised in the workforce.

Mothers to Mothers started in one clinic in Cape Town in 2001, with an initial focus on preventing the

From top: A family supported by m2m outside their home in Lesotho (c) m2m/ Karin Schermbrucker. A Mentor Mother checks a child for signs of malnutrition in Malawi (c) m2m/ Karin Schermbrucker.

transmission of HIV from mother to child. Since then, by working in close partnership with communities and governments, it has expanded its service range and has worked across 14 countries to date, creating over 12,000 jobs. It has reached more than 17 million people with health services and helped to keep more than three million at-risk mothers and children alive. To help it scale its impact, it has also partnered with governments on more than 10 initiatives to scale up the use of paid, professional community health workers, such as Mentor Mothers.

Investments in Mothers to Mothers by philanthropists and corporates has helped it unlock step changes in the past — for instance by allowing it to enter new countries, or trial new technologies for its front-line teams.

Kuleba adds: “Now, we are seeing this moment of change as an opportunity for new and meaningful partnerships to emerge. The Mothers to Mothers’ model has already demonstrated how building local ownership and capacity can create sustainable, real

From top: A mother and baby helped in South Africa (c) m2m/Karin Schermbrucker. Mentor Mothers outside the clinic they work at, in South Africa (c) m2m/ Karin Schermbrucker.

health outcomes for communities and societies more broadly. We have a rare chance to reimagine traditional approaches, move beyond top-down methods of assistance, and harness the power of new technologies such as AI to bring health to marginalised communities.”

Brenda, a Mothers to Mothers client in Zambia, says: “There have been so many changes since the funding cuts came into effect, especially since we now have fewer community health workers. Mentor Mothers made it easier for us to stay in care. They would visit us at home every two weeks to remind us to take our medication and made us feel cared for. They were friendly and supportive.

“It’s now harder to get the help we need. People are struggling to access care, and many are anxious. I feel worried and frustrated. It feels like I’m losing the support system that helped me get better.

“Without the Mentor Mothers’ regular visits, it’s harder for me to stick to my treatment plan. Now, I must rely more on the health facility, which is often overcrowded and stressful. I spend the whole day there and miss doing important things at home like laundry, cleaning, or cooking for my family.

“If I can’t manage my condition, I won’t be able to take care of my son. He’s only one, and thanks to Mothers to Mothers, he’s been doing well. There’s no one else to look after him if something happens to me.” ◇

m2m.org

> *“Now, we are seeing this moment of change as an opportunity for new and meaningful partnerships to emerge. The Mothers to Mothers’ model has already demonstrated how building local ownership and capacity can create sustainable, real health outcomes for communities and societies more broadly.”*
> *— Ilda Kuleba, Africa director of Mothers to Mothers.*

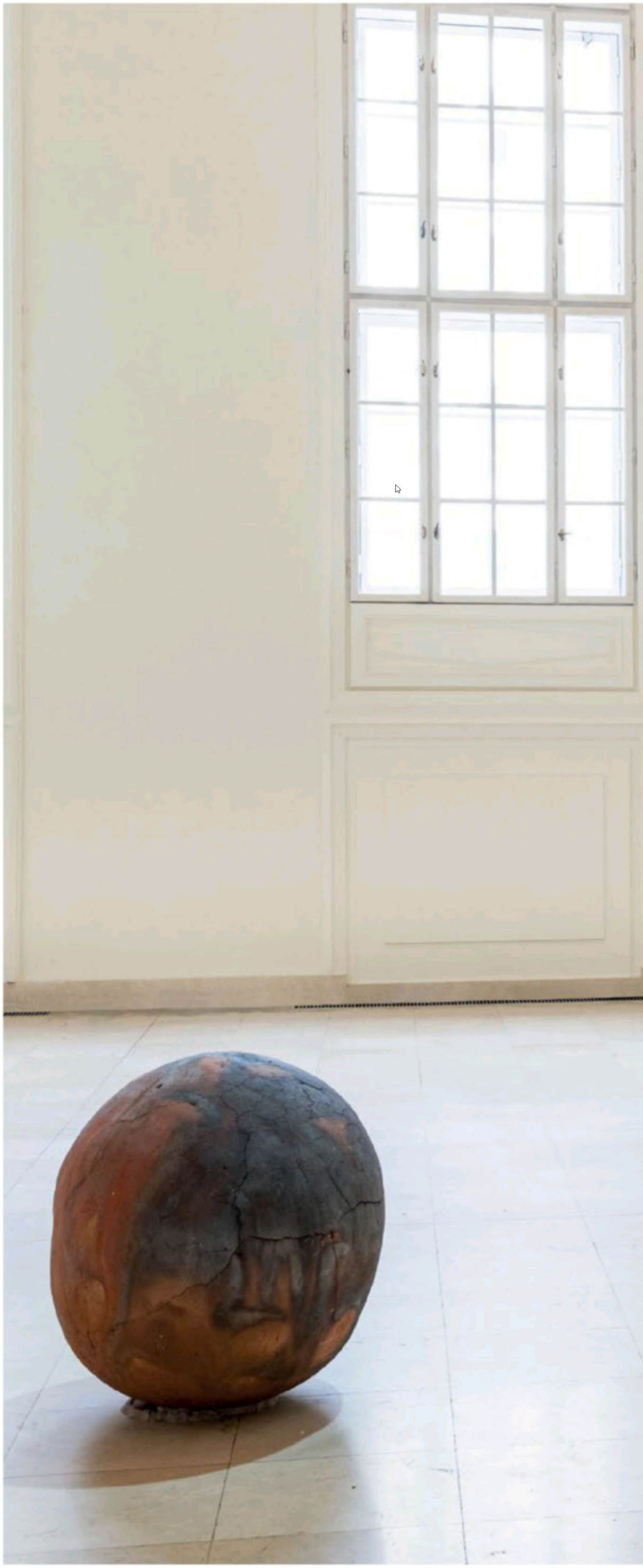
TIMELESS ARCHITECTURE

“We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us.” — Winston Churchill

Wabi-Sabi Wisdom

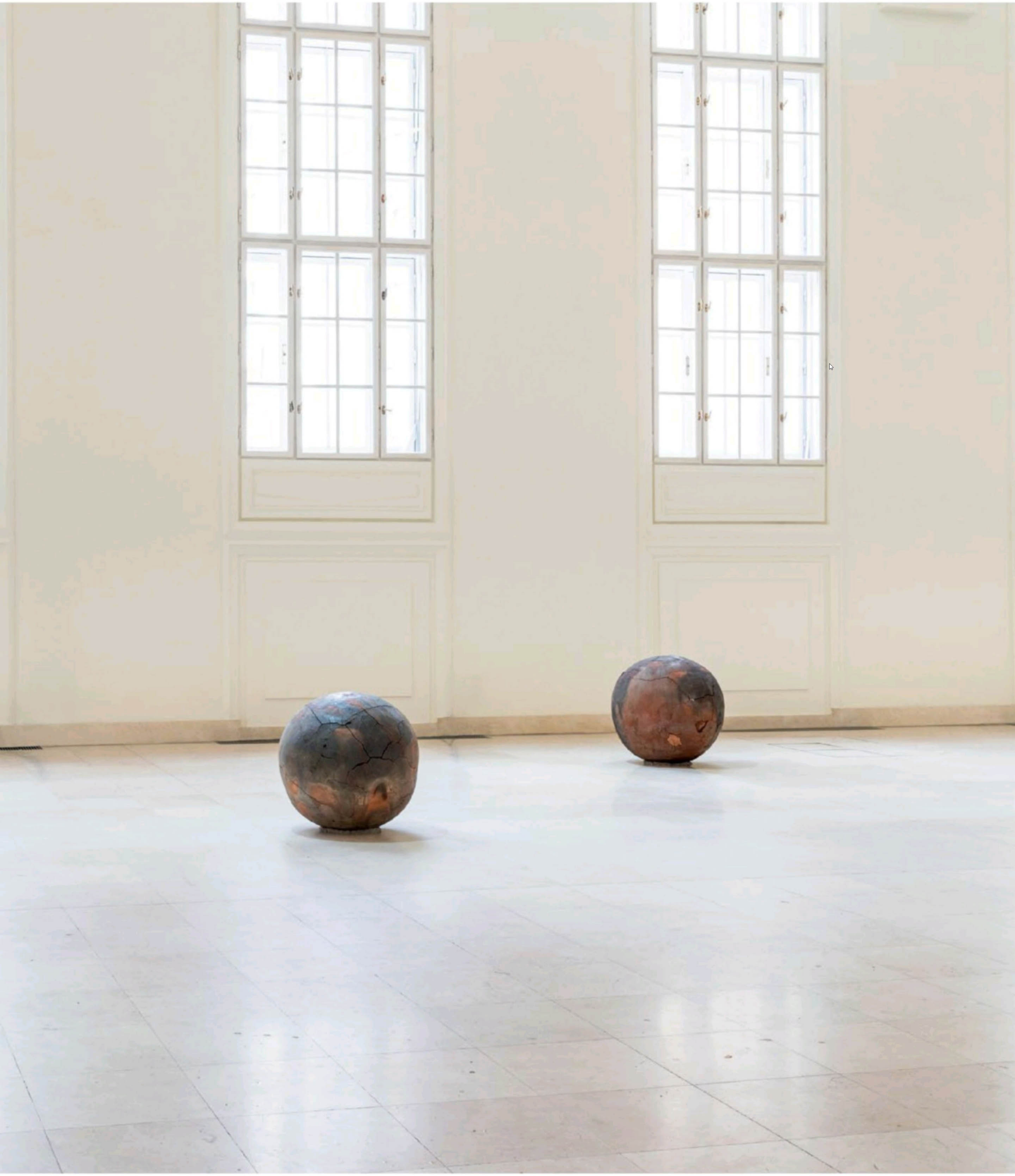
Mexican artist Bosco Sodi's foundation works to support his young contemporaries.

by Daniel Nash



It was a three-month residency in Japan in 2004 that fundamentally changed the way Bosco Sodi made art.

"The residency changed my point of view about aesthetics, it evolved my work," the Mexican artist says. "I've always felt very close to the Buddhist philosophy, but for me the impact mentally and on my work was tremendous."



Bosco Sodi's exhibition Totality at Vienna's König Gallery, featuring six clay spheres taken from the ground in Mexico, surrounded by Cosmic paintings (c) Simon Veres.

It was there he realised that imperfections — like the cracks and chinks in his clay sculptures — are what make each artwork individual, mirroring nature's imperfections. Rooted in Zen Buddhism, wabi-sabi also celebrates the natural cycles of growth and decay and the beauty of transience. "The passing of time, the impermanence of life, are what characterise my work now."

He returned home to Red Hook, Brooklyn, New York and over the years gained recognition for his use of raw and natural materials such as sawdust, fossilised wood, pigments and clay to create large-scale textured works. His pieces have been featured in major galleries and museums worldwide, including the Noguchi, the Bronx, the Instituto Valencià d'Art Modern, and the Palazzo Vendramin Grimani in Venice.

One of his most famous works was the politically motivated installation Muro — a wall of bricks made in Mexico — built in Washington Square Park in New York in 2017 during the first US presidency of Donald Trump and dismantled the same day by passers-by who took a brick each. The work was recreated on London's South Bank in London during Mr Trump's visit to the UK in 2018.

Below: Sodi's Perfect Bodies, more than 20 hand-formed clay spheres, in an unexpected snowstorm in New York, December 2020. Right from top: Bosco Sodi. Bosco Sodi uses raw, natural materials to create paintings and sculptures whose final forms are dictated by the forces of nature (c) Aldo Ayllon.

"The residency changed my point of view about aesthetics, it evolved my work, I've always felt very close to the Buddhist philosophy, but for me the impact mentally and on my work was tremendous."
— Bosco Sodi.

Noi siamo uno.

Casa Wabi has supported over 350 artists and creatives through its residency programme since its establishment in October 2014.

His favourite of his artworks though, was his Los Atlantes land art, an installation made up of 64 2 metre-long cubes of bricks. In total, 102,400 pieces were baked in a rustic oven within 40 batches for nearly 1,000 hours. “It was so monumental, it took me nearly three years to complete.”

It had always been in his mind to give back with a community-oriented art foundation to support young artists, aligned aesthetically with his wabi-sabi ideals. But what he had in mind demanded the touch of a master of wabi-sabi, someone he greatly admired, Tadao Ando, Japanese autodidactic architect. In 2009, Sodi first contacted Ando to ask him to work with him on the Casa Wabi foundation; but he refused, initially. The project was small and low budget and not what the Pritzker Prize-winning architect was usually accustomed to. Plus, Ando was also diagnosed with cancer around the same time, which he has since recovered from after various surgeries.

“From the very beginning I wanted to create a foundation with Ando because the philosophy of his work has a lot of similarities with mine,” says 70-year-old Sodi. “But it was hard to convince him. After I met him, he came to my studio and he loved my work, especially the red paintings. He told me he was going to think about it.”

Opportunity struck, disguised in the form of disaster. During Hurricane Sandy in 2012, Sodi’s Brooklyn studio flooded with about 6ft of water, destroying most of his art and materials. The artist later cast the remaining damaged sculptures in bronze, creating new works that represented both destruction and creation.

“After Storm Sandy, that’s when he decided to do the project with me,” says Sodi. Ando said in a recent interview about Casa Wabi: “Mexican architecture influences all others around the world.”

Bosco Sodi’s handmade clay spheres.

In 2014, Casa Wabi was born, a beachfront complex of minimalist concrete. Its facilities include a multipurpose palapa, six bedrooms, two closed studios and six open studios, a screening room/ auditorium, a 450-square-metre exhibition gallery and various workspaces. Its mission? To forge social development through the arts, with five key programmes: residencies, exhibitions, clay, cinema, and mobile library.

Casa Wabi has supported over 350 artists and creatives through its residency programme since its establishment in October 2014.

Sodi is most proud of the connections forged with the surrounding coastal communities. To date, some 300 projects have been carried out to enrich the lives of others. "The community work the artists have done and the exchange of knowledge and information between the artists and the community has developed and enriched each other mutually," he says.

For example, one successful project involved Mexican artists Claudia Fernández and Benjamín Torres working with students from Niño Artillero primary school in San Isidro Llano Grande to compile,

Top: Rock and Roll, Bosco Sodi, Museum Casa das Rosas and Luciana Brito, in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Below: The first solo exhibition devoted to Bosco Sodi's clay cube sculptures, Caryatides, at the Paul Kasmin Gallery, in New York

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> *"The community work the artists have done and the exchange of knowledge and information between the artists and the community has developed and enriched each other mutually,"*
> *— Bosco Sodi.*

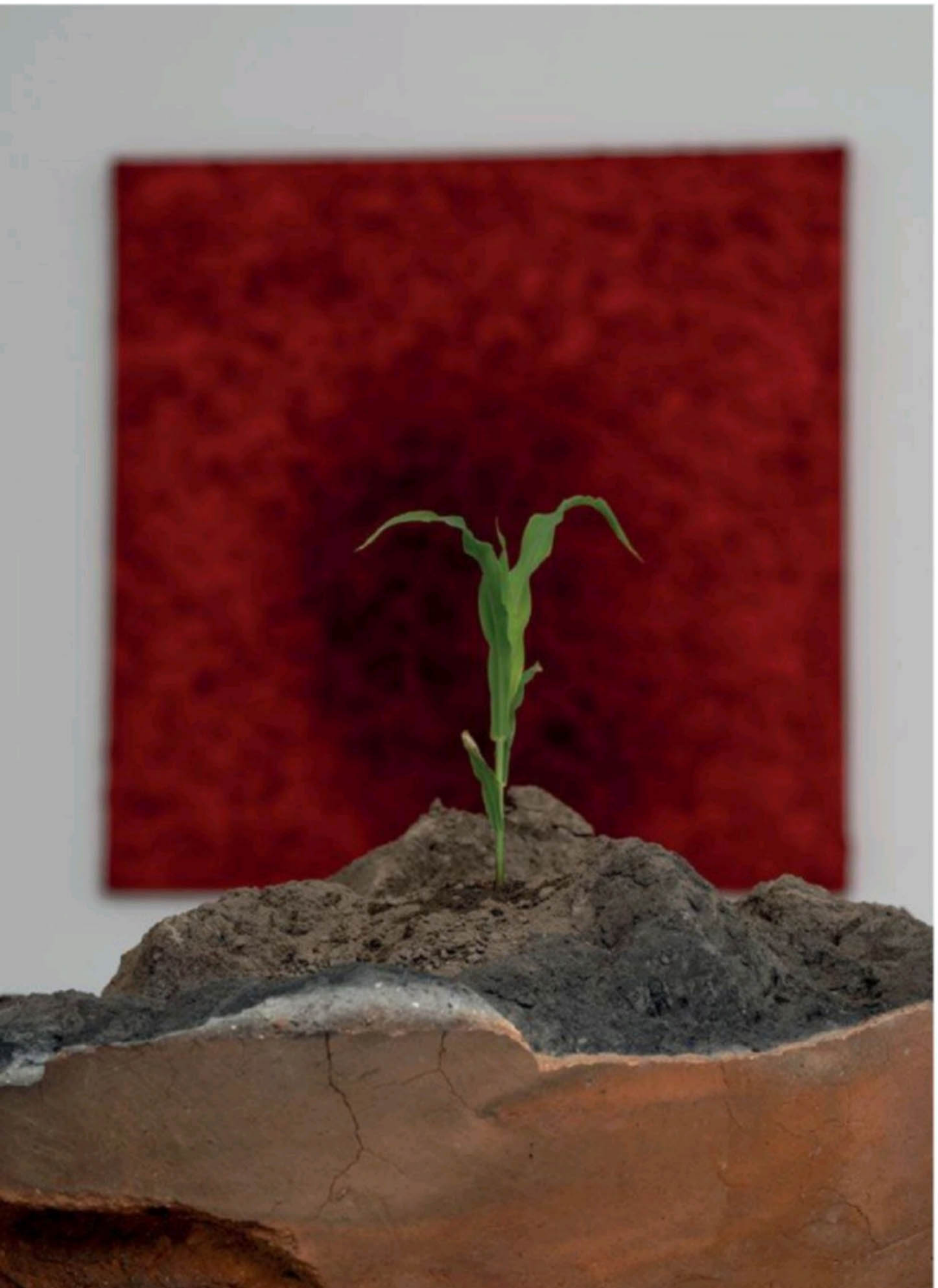
illustrate, and publish a bestiary of plants and animals from the region in Chatino. Neither artist had previous experience with the language. Spoken by about 45,000 people in Oaxaca, Chatino was, until the creation of a documentation project in 2003, an oral language with no written form.

Another recent project saw the creation of an Orchid Pavilion, a wooden structure, permanent, sustainable, and lightweight, dedicated to the conservation of orchids in the Oaxaca region, which highlights the strong relationship between the biological and cultural diversity of the landscape.

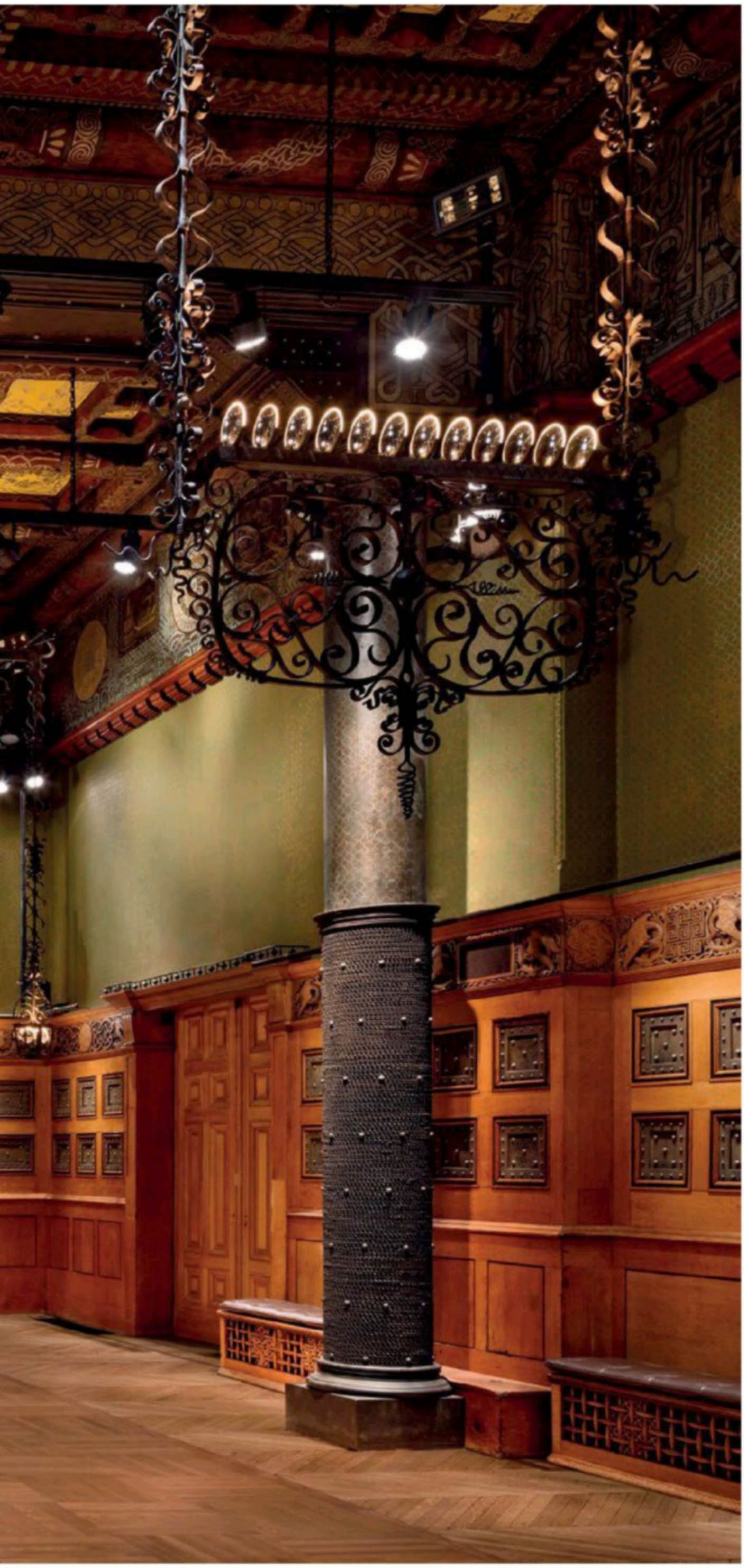
In 2019, Japanese architect Kengo Kuma created a special chicken coop for Casa Wabi, as a representation of collective housing. The structure is built from charred wooden boards following the traditional Japanese technique of Shou Sugi Ban, which is intended to contrast with the environment of the Mexican beaches. The project gives way to a permeability in walls and ceilings that provides shade and ventilation to the chickens that inhabit it. The eggs are used as part of the sustainability programme in the kitchen of the foundation and the Hotel Escondido.

What started initially in Puerto Escondido, on the coast of Oaxaca, Mexico has grown with outposts in Atlampa, Mexico City (called Casa Wabi Sabino) and Tokyo (called Casa Wabi Nano). "Oaxaca was a place my grandfather was born, I used to come here when I was young. I feel very connected to the energy of the place," says Sodi. He adds: "I feel at home anywhere."

He says while Casa Wabi and Sabino are designed to support emerging artists, Casa Nano is for established Mexican artists, with a notable one being Aldo Álvarez Tostado, who participated in the programme. "Casa Nano is aimed at Mexican career artists. We send them for a month to feel the aesthetics and experience a new culture. Just like I did, and it changed everything for me." ◇



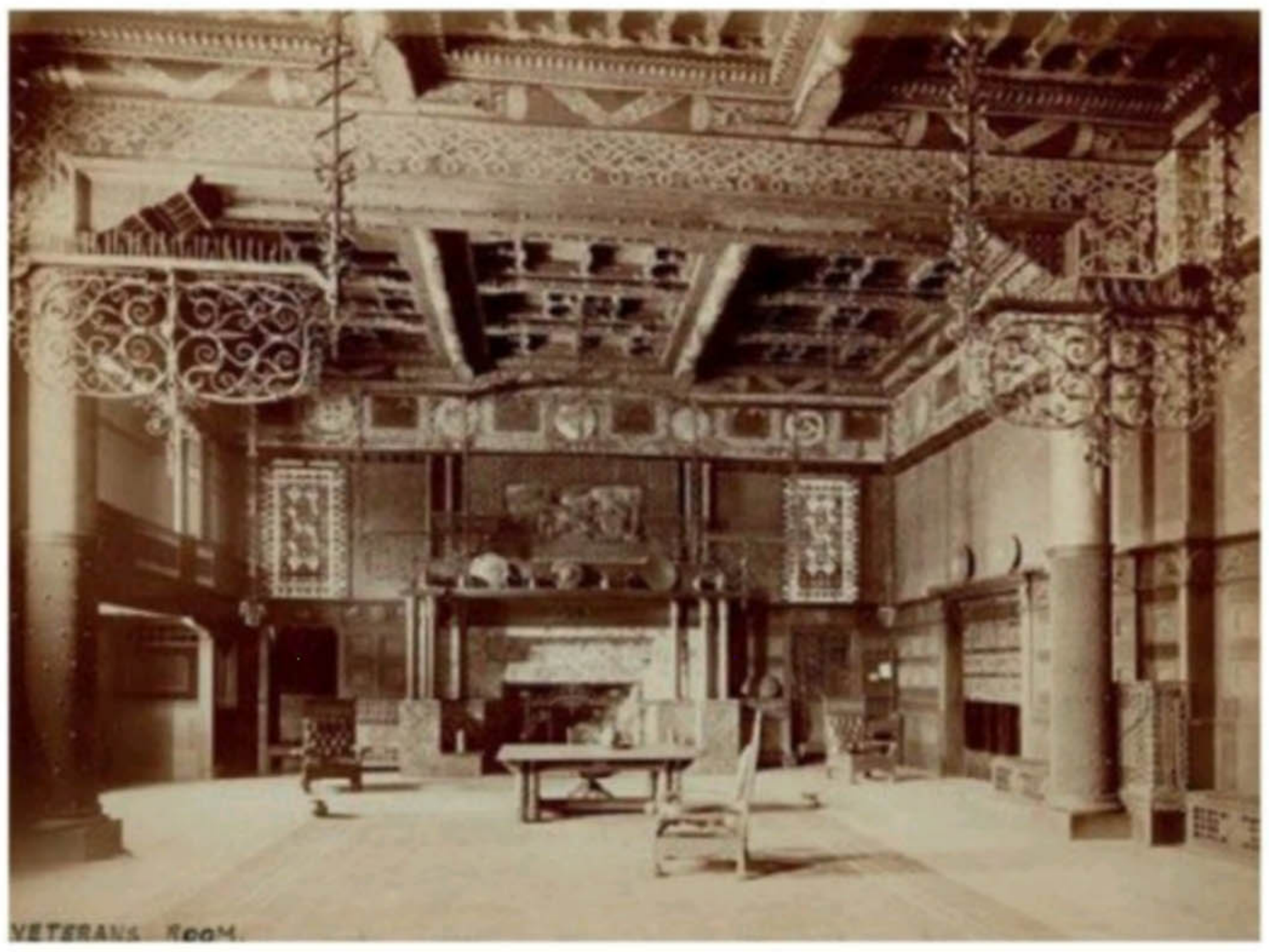
Top Left: Bosco Sodi, Into The Deepest, Axel Vervoordt Gallery. Below Left: Bosco Sodi, work in progress. Right: Bosco Sodi Solo Para Revivir, Kasmin Gallery, New York 2023



Restorers of NYC

Meet the women bringing New York's historic landmarks back to life.

by Lisa Young



Left: Veteran Room, Park Avenue Armory, now and in the 1800s. Photo by James Ewing, courtesy of Park Avenue Armory.

One of the joys of living in New York is the diverse tapestry of historical architecture that enrichens its streets, from Dutch Colonial to Beaux-Arts to Gothic and much more in between.

Monuments such as the Guggenheim Museum New York, the Palace Theatre on Broadway, the Park Avenue Armory and New York Public Library's flagship Steven Schwarzman Building have recently required substantial restoration with hefty price tags, and the greatest expertise is sought to oversee such delicate projects.

"Upgrading a historic building to current code and sustainability standards can be, figuratively, equivalent to open heart surgery. Our job is to ensure that the special character of the building, its soul, is not compromised."
— Debora Barros.

Opposite page: Inside the mural studio restoration of religious artwork, at EverGreene's head office in Industry City, Brooklyn, New York. This page from top: Restorer Debora Barros and Kim Lovejoy. All by (c) Lisa Young

New York-based Debora Barros, who works for Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, and Kim Lovejoy of Evergreene Architectural Arts, are two of the most respected professionals in the field who have worked on an array of New York's most cherished buildings.

"Upgrading a historic building to current code and sustainability standards can be, figuratively, equivalent to open heart surgery," says Barros. "Our job is to ensure that the special character of the building, its soul, is not compromised."

Barros worked on the Park Avenue Armory rehabilitation at the start of her career, collaborating with the artisans and conservators who were doing the paint analysis and delayering to show original paint schemes. She worked on the restoration of the Guggenheim Museum and the Palace Theatre on Broadway and 47th Street, part of an award-winning redevelopment, which included lifting the theatre 10m above its original elevation.

One of the biggest challenges for preservation in New York City, she says, is the tug of war between preservation and development. "It requires vision to understand the monetary value that significance of historic buildings can bring. There is an inherent perception on investors and developers that working with a historic building will cost much more, which is not necessarily true."

Barros adds that architects are not innocent in this process either. Many prefer a blank slate to showcase their design 'genius' instead of working to reconcile their ideas with the existing work and to transform a pre-existing building into something exciting and new.

Greenwashing comes into this imbalance too. "I find it interesting that so many demolish a building to build 'a sustainable' building on the plot. It is illogical. There is plenty of unapologetic demolition happening to our historic building stock. In my view, the sustainability discourse has enormous potential to support the retention of historic buildings, but it has not been strongly translated into policy that demands it from the market," she adds.

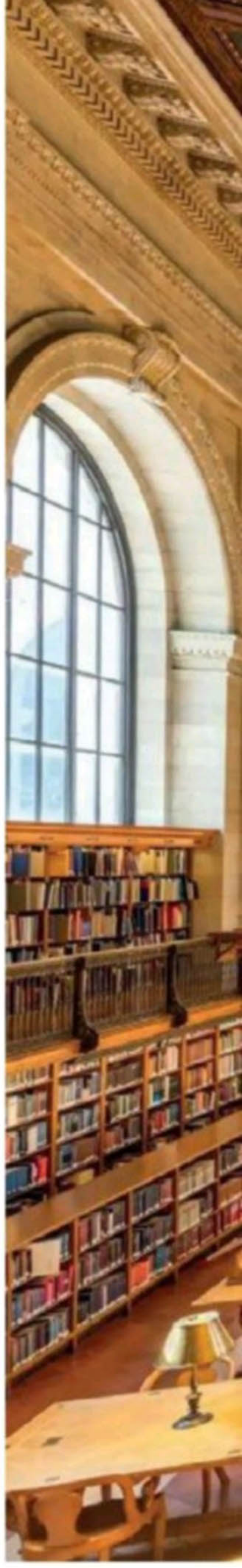
According to the World Economic Forum, the construction industry is responsible for a substantial amount of greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for roughly 37-40 per cent of global emissions. "Retaining, adapting, reusing the existing building stock is a duty in my mind, it is the responsible thing to do."

Kim Lovejoy, senior business development executive at Evergreene Architectural Arts in Brooklyn, is another New York-based expert at complex projects in historic and contemporary buildings.

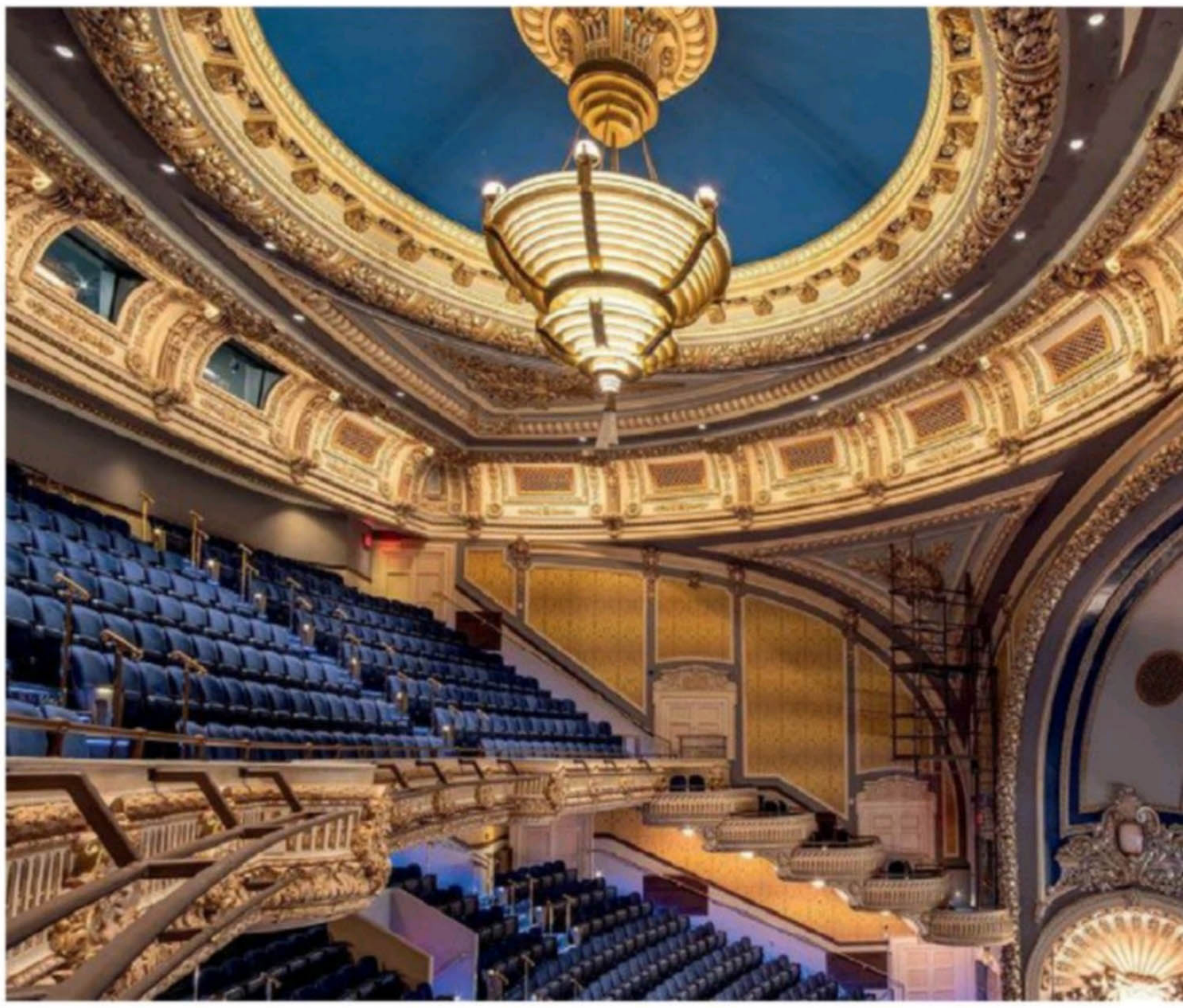
Evergreene, where she has worked for 27 years, focuses primarily on architectural ornament and artwork. Recent projects she spearheaded include the Rose Reading Room, the adjacent Catalog Room and three decorated stair halls at the New York Public Library's flagship Steven Schwarzman Building on Fifth Avenue at 42nd Street. "It's one of the most popular visited spaces in New York and, of course, the exhibitions at the library are of great interest." The Reading Room project was spurred when a 60-pound plaster ceiling rosette fell to the floor at night.

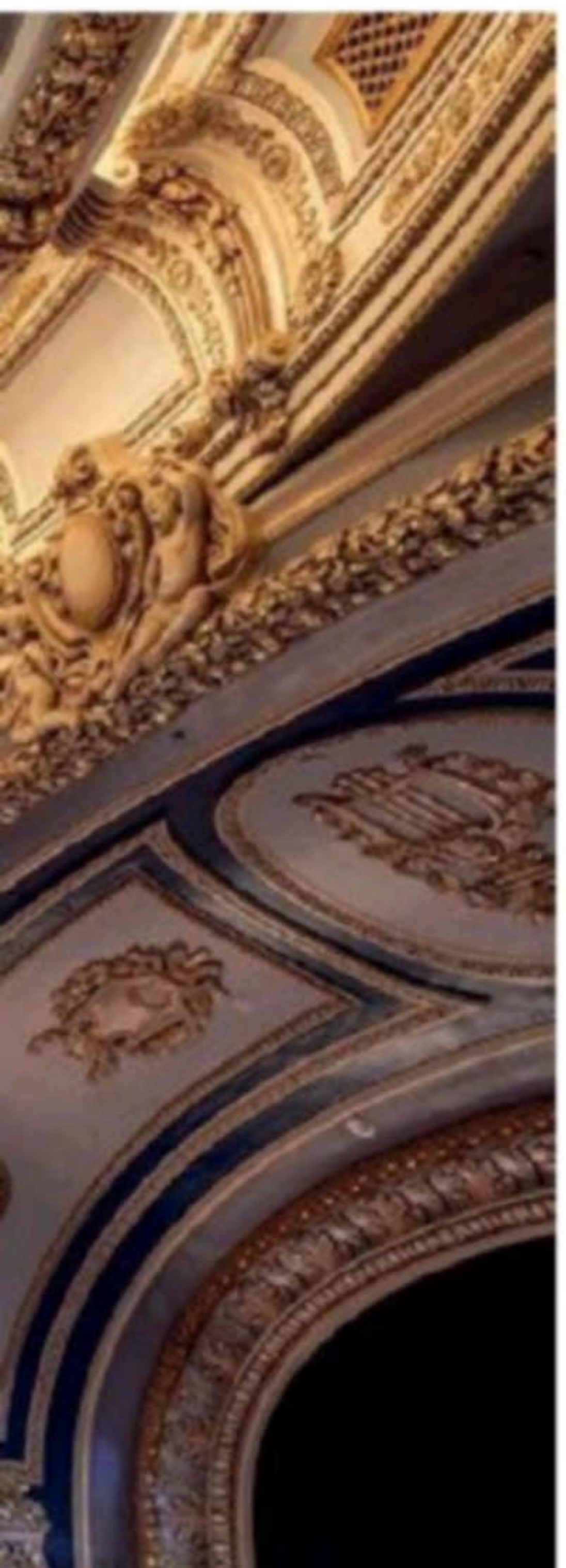
"People call and ask how can we do this project, and what are the things to think about? We're very involved forensically, understanding the historic materials conditions and identifying treatment options that will be durable. Often, when clients have an architectural team, we are consultants on materials conservation and design," says Lovejoy.

Evergreene also designs for houses of worship, with its Sacred Spaces Studio. "There's often a combination of conserving existing features and



Left: The Palace Theatre, Broadway.
Right: Stephen A Schwarzman
Building, New York Public Library.





> *"The most challenging situation is handling murals with lead paste adhesive, historically when we're having to remove and reinstall all or part of a mural; that requires the highest level of safety and protection. Asbestos can be found in some historic plaster, and often in painted fire curtains in theatres. We plan carefully for safety in our procedures."*
> *— Kim Lovejoy.*

"My most important mission now at Evergreene is to teach and inspire its leaders to carry on responsible stewardship of our architectural heritage."
— Kim Lovejoy.

designing new elements. A lot of churches want to update figures and decorative elements in response to the cultural diversity of the congregations and changing liturgical practices and usage of the building," she adds.

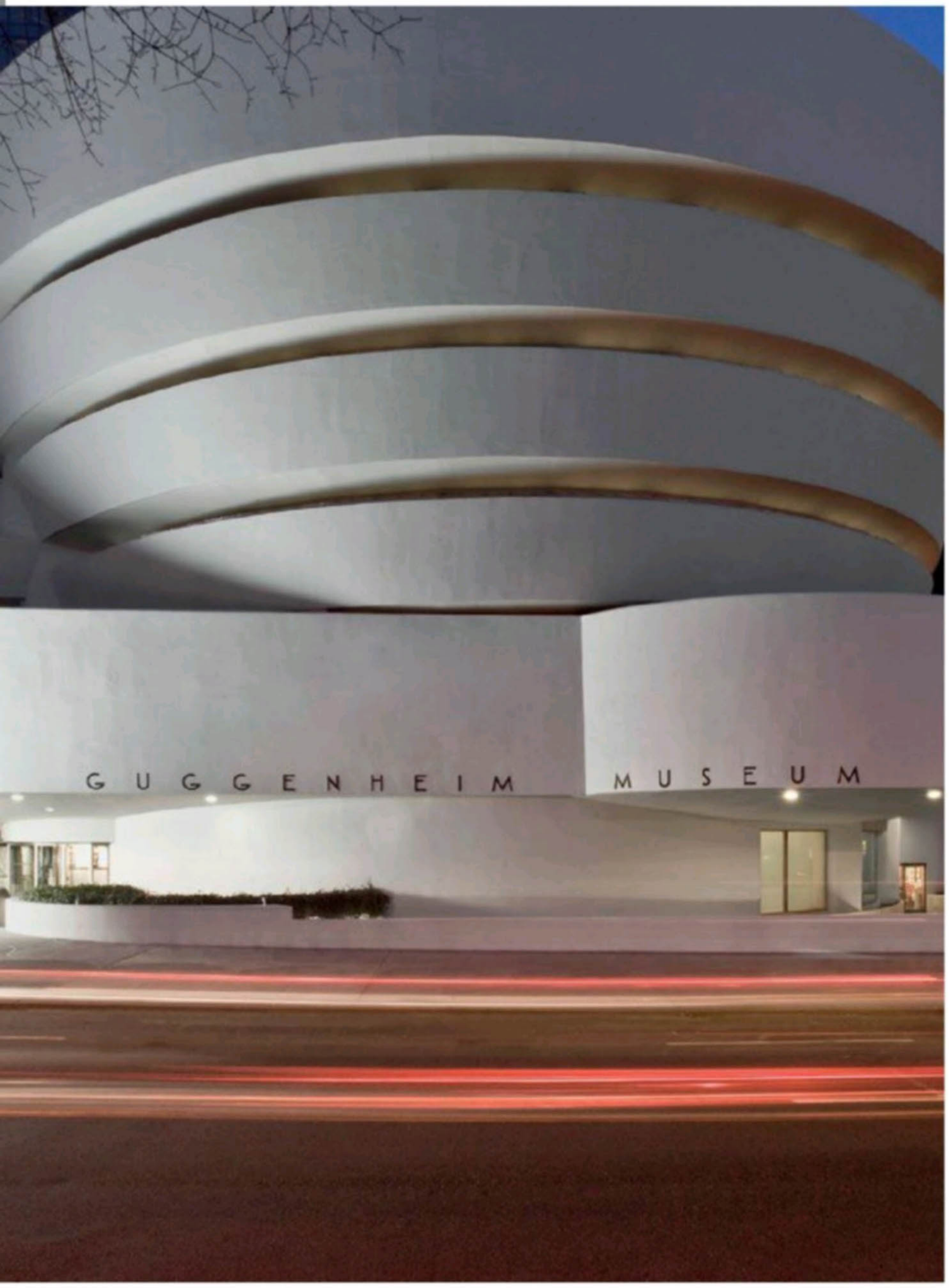
On a church with a budget, for example, Evergreene can produce repetitive ceiling and wallcovering patterns on printed canvas or paper, as well as hand-painted murals. "Our craftsmen on site will restore the plasterwork, perform decorative painting on three-dimensional ornament, while conservators are cleaning and conserving murals and historic decorative elements on site, and we can install newly made artwork to replicate what is missing or as a new feature."

Ensuring that modern materials do not compromise a historical integrity of a building is key. Lovejoy says: "We are aware of how lime plasters and gypsum plasters, and historic lead-based paints, oil-based paints and varnishes, how they age over time, and then what is available with current materials now. We must carefully choose materials for chemical compatibility and durability, and pay attention to regulations, which can limit the types of materials used in buildings, and with other safety issues."

She adds: "The most challenging situation is handling murals with lead paste adhesive, historically when we're having to remove and reinstall all or part of a mural; that requires the highest level of safety and protection. Asbestos can be found in some historic plaster, and often in painted fire curtains in theatres. We plan carefully for safety in our procedures."

She also believes the idea of sustainability in development should factor in more preservation. "My most important mission now at Evergreene is to teach and inspire its leaders to carry on responsible stewardship of our architectural heritage." ◇

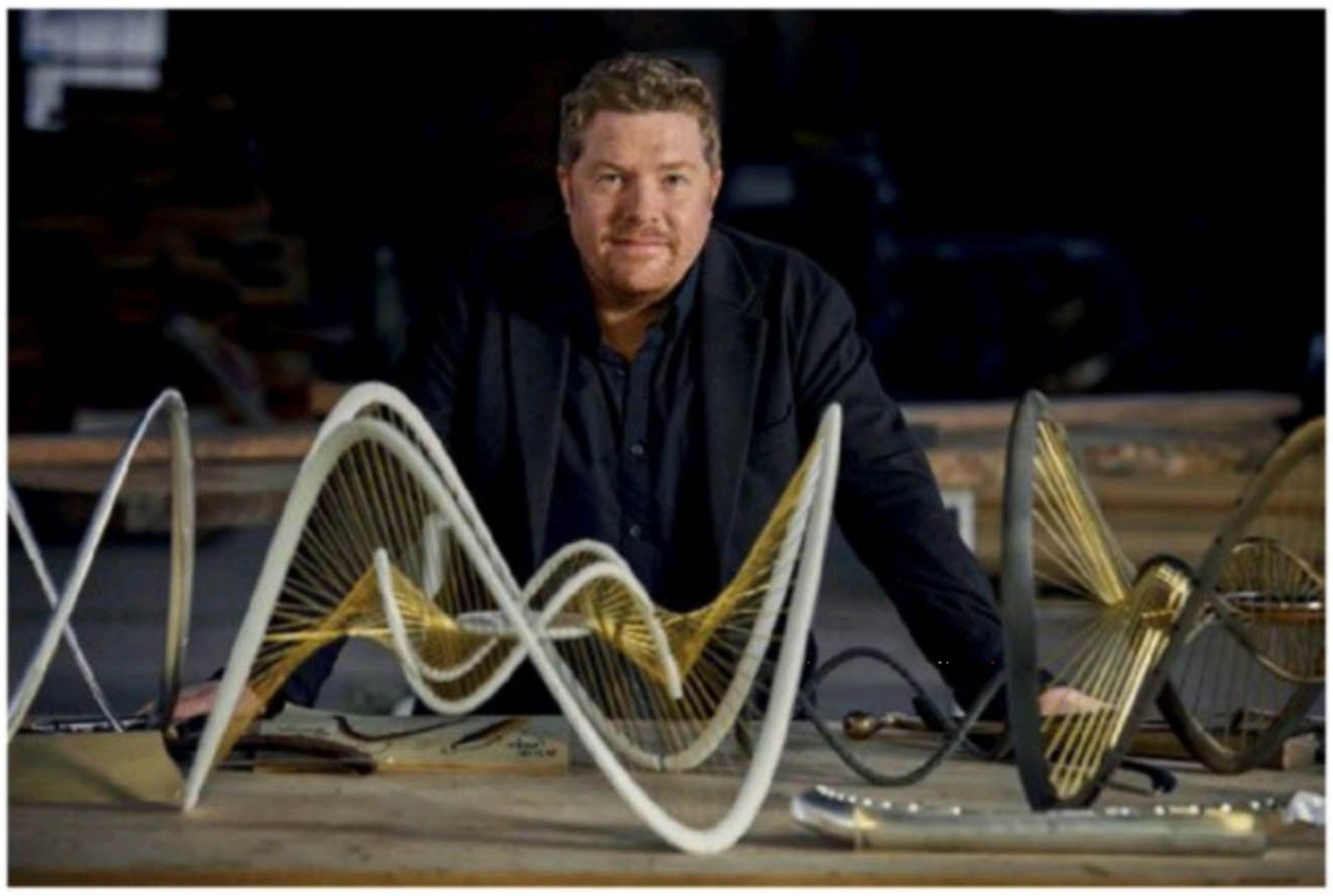
Left and right: Solomon R Guggenheim Museum, New York. Photo: David Heald © Solomon R Guggenheim Foundation.



Fostering the Arts

Ben Dobbin of Foster + Partners appreciates the weight of architectural legacy.

by Daniel Nash

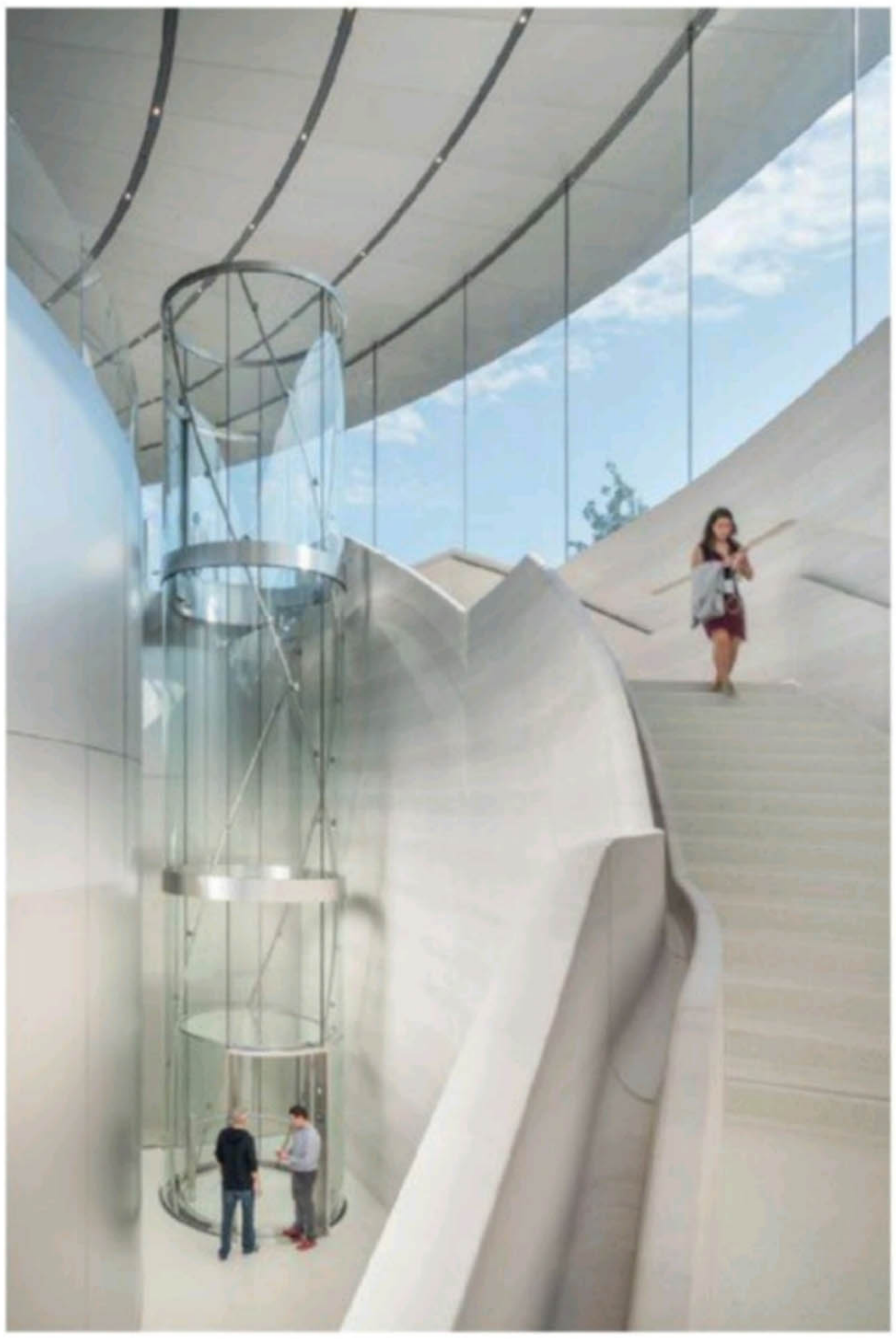


Above: Ben Dobbin, Senior Partner at Foster + Partners with The Dalmore Luminary 2025 Edition — The Rare prototype, in the workshop. Right: Inside the spaceship-like Apple Park, the corporate headquarters of Apple, in Cupertino, designed by Foster + Partners.

For British architect Ben Dobbin, San Francisco-based senior partner in the leadership team for Foster + Partners in California, the purpose of good architecture should be about “making people’s lives better”.

This was a sentiment that was behind his thinking on design projects including The Gherkin building, London, the EY Headquarters in Amsterdam, and the Apple Park in Cupertino, California, which he said was “the project of a lifetime”.

“Apple was so keen to create the best office campus in the world. It’s about an environment, not just a building. The interplay between a vibrant natural landscape, rooted in California in the topography and the species, and how



"Apple was so keen to create the best office campus in the world. It's about an environment, not just a building. The interplay between a vibrant natural landscape, rooted in California in the topography and the species, and how that interplays with the keen lines of the ring, that is the magic." — Ben Dobbin.

that interplays with the keen lines of the ring, that is the magic."

Dobbin, who has worked at Foster + Partners for 24 years, spent much time directly working with Pritzker Prize-winning Norman Foster, who, at 89, is still involved in many projects and is a key figure in British modernist architecture.

It is a relationship that informs Dobbin's approach today. "Norman is such a brilliant and hard-working architect on so many levels," he says. "He challenges us to challenge what the heart of the project is trying to be or trying to solve and interrogate the proposition through dialogue and analysis."

He adds: "His mantra is that it is never too late to change something that isn't quite right. Don't accept anything less than perfection."

Now is an exciting time for global architects, adds Dobbin, with the duality of new world cities, with many examples in the Middle East: building brand-new skylines, juxtaposed with old architectural hubs in Europe needing renewing.

"Now the majority of the world is living in cities, we as architects are asking what the solutions for new cities set for huge population growth," says Dobbin. "Conversely, in older cities such as in Europe, there is a whole generation of buildings reaching the limits of their sustainability. So how do you adapt and reuse, to move them forward to their next 50 years?"

Inside the spaceship-like Apple Park in Cupertino, California designed by Foster + Partners, completed in 2017.

"Now the majority of the world is living in cities, we as architects are asking what the solutions for new cities set for huge population growth."
— Ben Dobbin.

He points to one of the projects he is currently focused on: the 1970s Transamerica Pyramid in San Francisco, which until 2018 was the city's tallest building on the skyline with strong historical ties for the city. In 2022 Foster + Partners was hired to redesign the interiors and renovate the building, after it was sold to New York investor Michael Shvo.

"The Transamerica Pyramid is a dearly beloved icon in San Francisco and there was a lot of opposition to change. With that project, we sought to remove all the things that are impediments, strip it back and see it for what it should be. Now, it has become a symbol of revitalisation and even people who first worked there when it opened are enthusiastic about it."

Respecting the building's heritage, the office space has been reimagined as a living space, with a sophisticated emphasis placed on comfort, hospitality, and flexibility for tenants and guests. In addition to the on-site private members' club, hospitality-grade amenities and service elevate the offering. Retail is carefully curated and two floors in the middle of the tower are dedicated to wellness, a lounge and conferencing facilities, all with panoramic city views. Additionally, the top floor below the spire culminates these amenities with a private bar and lounge.

From left: The Ernst & Young (EY) headquarters in Amsterdam. 30 St Mary Axe, London, aka The Gherkin (c) Nigel Young.

Inside the Transamerica Pyramid, San Francisco, first designed by famed architect William Pereira and completed in 1972, restored by Foster + Partners.

> *“Spending time at The Dalmore Distillery really shaped my design process and with the sculpture, I wanted to bring to life our shared a sense of place, materiality, and how our worlds bridge.”*
> *— Ben Dobbin.*

In his spare time, the British architect and designer works as a digital artist informed by his synaesthesia, as he says on his Instagram page, “obsessed with sight and sound”.

In his dual capacity as an artist and architect, Dobbin was recently tapped to design a sculpture to celebrate Scotch whisky maker The Dalmore’s Luminary 2025 Edition, a rare 52-year-old single-malt whisky sold this year at a Sotheby’s auction in Hong Kong with proceeds going to the V&A in Dundee, Scotland’s first design museum.

Since forming their partnership in 2020 and the inception of The Luminary Series in 2021, The Dalmore has given over £250,000 to the museum to aid in their design and community work both locally and globally.

Dobbin, who spent time in Scotland at The Dalmore Distillery on the shores of the Cromarty Firth, said: “Spending time at The Dalmore Distillery really shaped my design process and with the sculpture, I wanted to bring to life our shared a sense of place, materiality, and how our worlds bridge.”

He adds: “The whisky is complex and curated to have high notes and low notes, like a synaesthetic language, which I wanted to reflect.” ◇

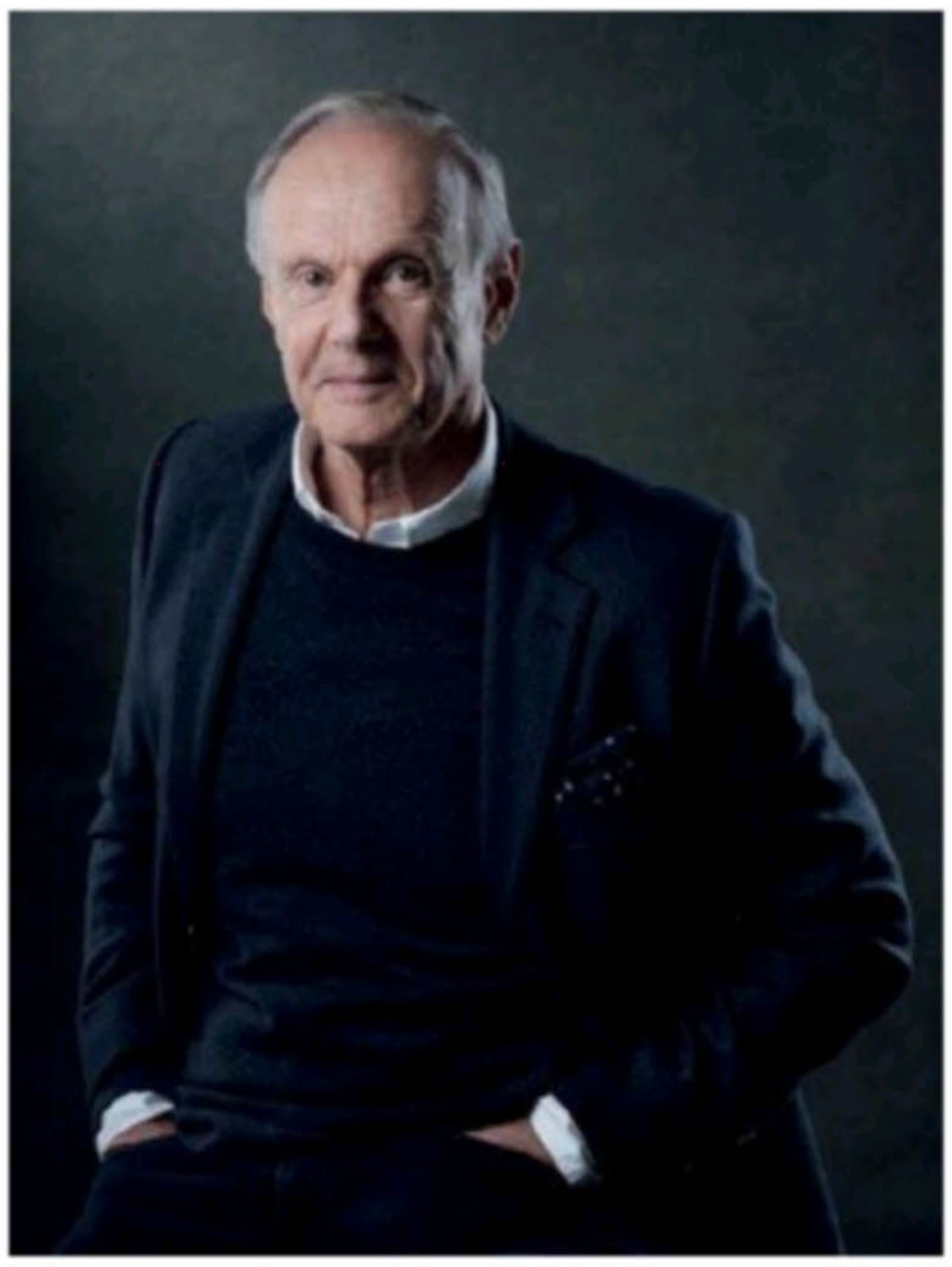
INSPIRING PLACES

“Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry,
and narrow-mindedness.”
— Mark Twain

Ideal Worlds

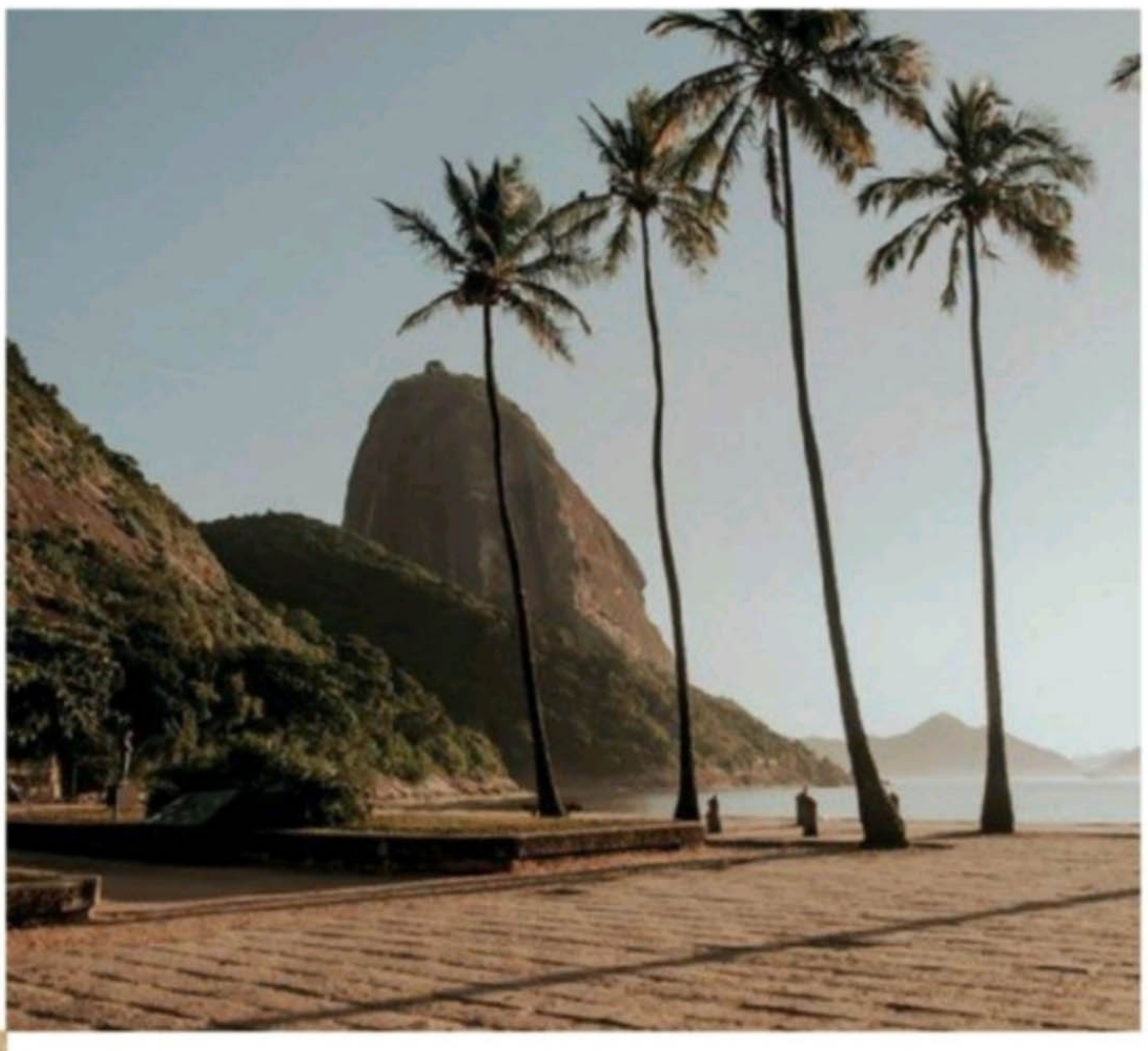
Unesco World Heritage Sites with stunning natural landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and opportunities for adventurous exploration.

by Anthony Lassman

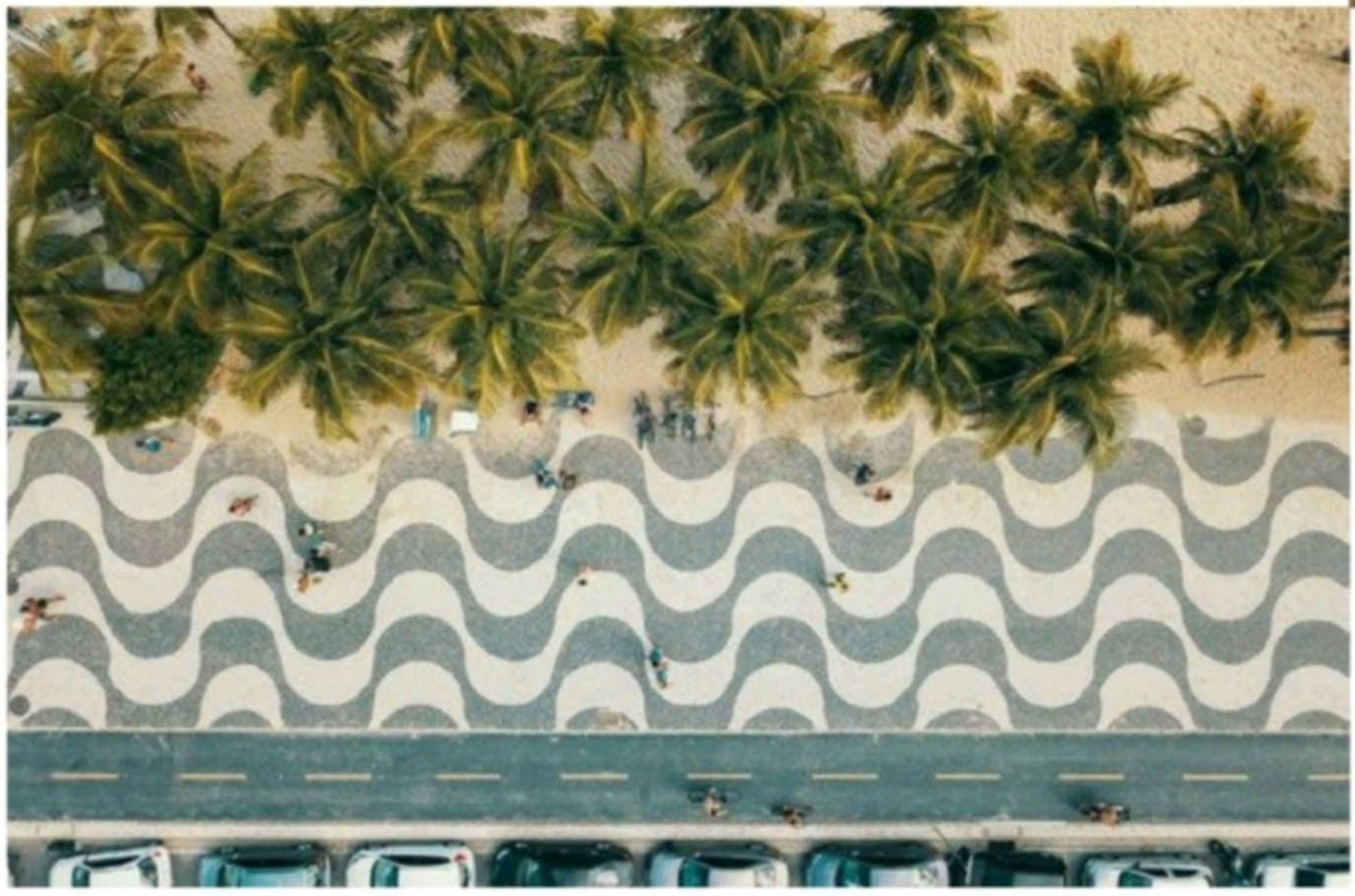


Clockwise from top left: Angkor Wat. Porto. Serengeti. Matera. Giza. Cartagena. Top:Anthony Lassman, Nota Bene founder.

Rio de Janeiro



Could there be a city more arrestingly beautiful than Brazil's Rio? It has Carioca landscapes, the peaks of Corcovado and Sugar Loaf, and dramatic panoramas of mountains and ocean as seen from the Tijuca National Park and the Christ the Redeemer statue. Rio also has a great urban landscape, with energy, music and great restaurants. Take a helicopter to see it in all its magnificence; continue south to the colonial town of Paraty and cruise the islands of the Bay of Angra; continue by private plane to Bahia and rent a sumptuous villa with direct access to an endless stretch of palm-fringed beach.



From top: Rio (c) Agustin Diaz Gargiulo. Rio (c) Thales Botelho de Sousa. Ipanema Beach Rio (c) Luis Diego Aguilar.

Okavango Delta

The topographically magnificent landscape of the Okavango Delta, Botswana, where tourism is strictly controlled, is richly blessed with wildlife. It is also blessed with some of the continent's most exclusive beautifully designed lodges where every comfort, private game viewing, world-class cuisine, fine wines and the ultimate in privacy and exclusivity is provided for the upscale traveller. In summer, after the rains have filled the plains, it is the combination of land and water-based safari that makes this destination unique. Little compares with the experience of being rowed through the Delta's waterways on a traditional mokoro.

From top: A mokoro, a, narrow, dugout canoe used to navigate the Okavango Delta in Botswana (c) Nota Bene. Set on the Okavango Delta, Wilderness Jao Camp is the alpha of safari stays.

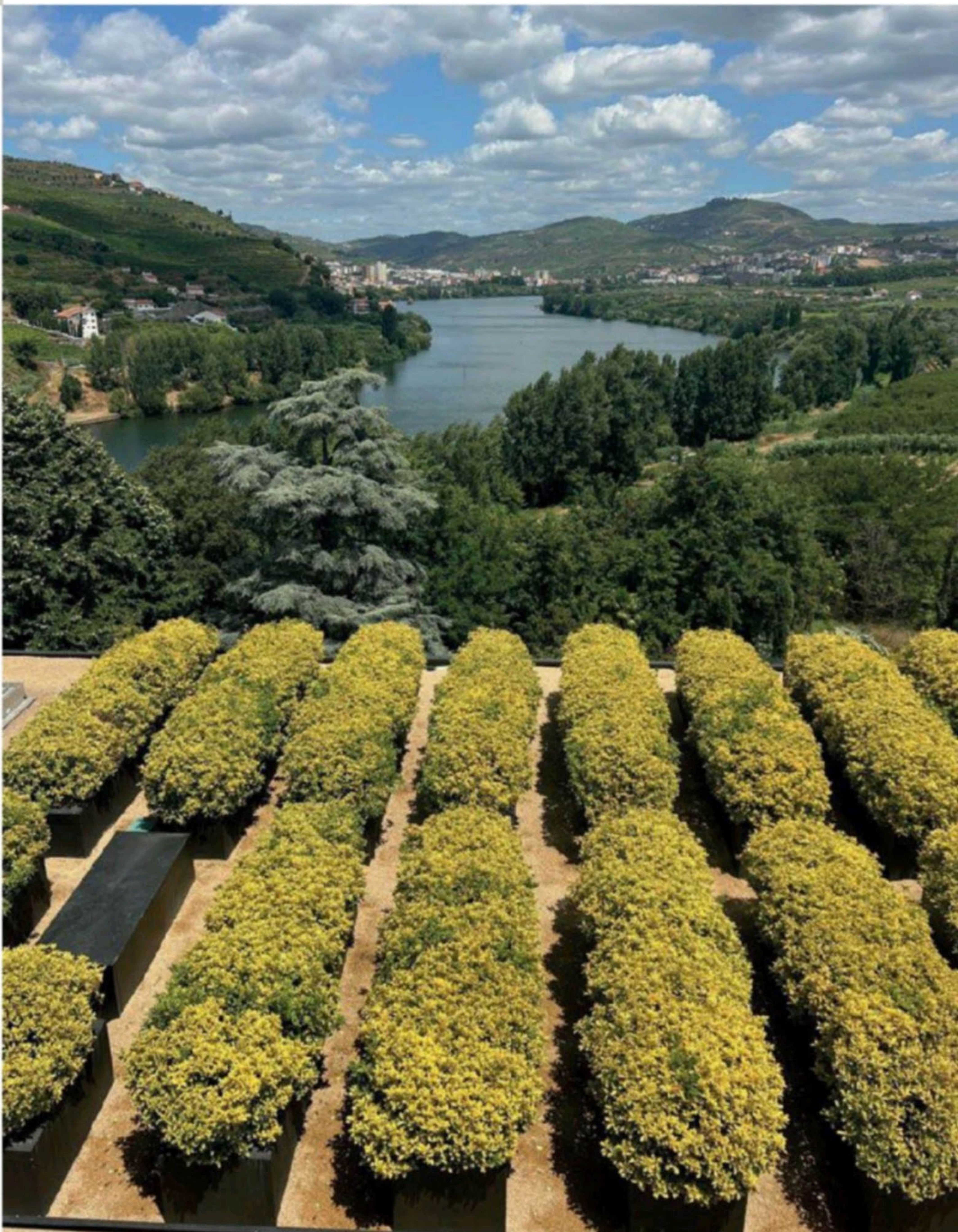
Street dancers in Cartagena. Casa de Indias in Cartegena designed by Lina Botero.

Cartagena

This walled city by the Caribbean is the second city of Colombia. It is hot, steamy, colourful and vibrant; but it takes knowing and how best to do it in style. My advice is to rent the finest colonial villa in the centre of the old city, with a retinue of staff and a personal chef. Tropical nights dining al fresco in the privacy of a beautiful walled garden with musicians in the background; a top curator to accompany your private visit to the Botero Museum; and an expert to explain the significance of the city's military architecture are all essential to ensure the best experience. Cruise to the Rosario islands and Baru; fly on to Bogotá for a visit to the private studio of Olga de Amaral, a foremost contemporary artist of Colombia, before continuing by plane to Barichara, an enchanting colonial town in the mountains. This is all part of a carefully curated Colombian odyssey.

Porto

Smaller and more intimate than Lisbon, Portugal's second city is best reached by helicopter if arriving from the capital. Porto has 2,000 years of history, its riverside area of delightful medieval streets earning it Unesco status. The entire historical centre, with its cathedral, monastery, churches and famous bridge that crosses the Douro River, is a national monument, and deservedly so. Aside from the beauty of the city, with its showcase of Baroque, Gothic and Neoclassical architecture, Porto is gateway to the beautiful Douro Valley with its important wineries, gorgeous landscapes and winding river that flows from Spain all the way to the Atlantic. Spend a few days in Porto in a suite at top boutique hotel, The Largo; enjoy Nuno Mendes' cuisine at Cozinha das Flores; and charter a boat on the Douro River before continuing the trip to Lisbon and the ravishing countryside of Alentejo and beaches of fashionable Comporta.

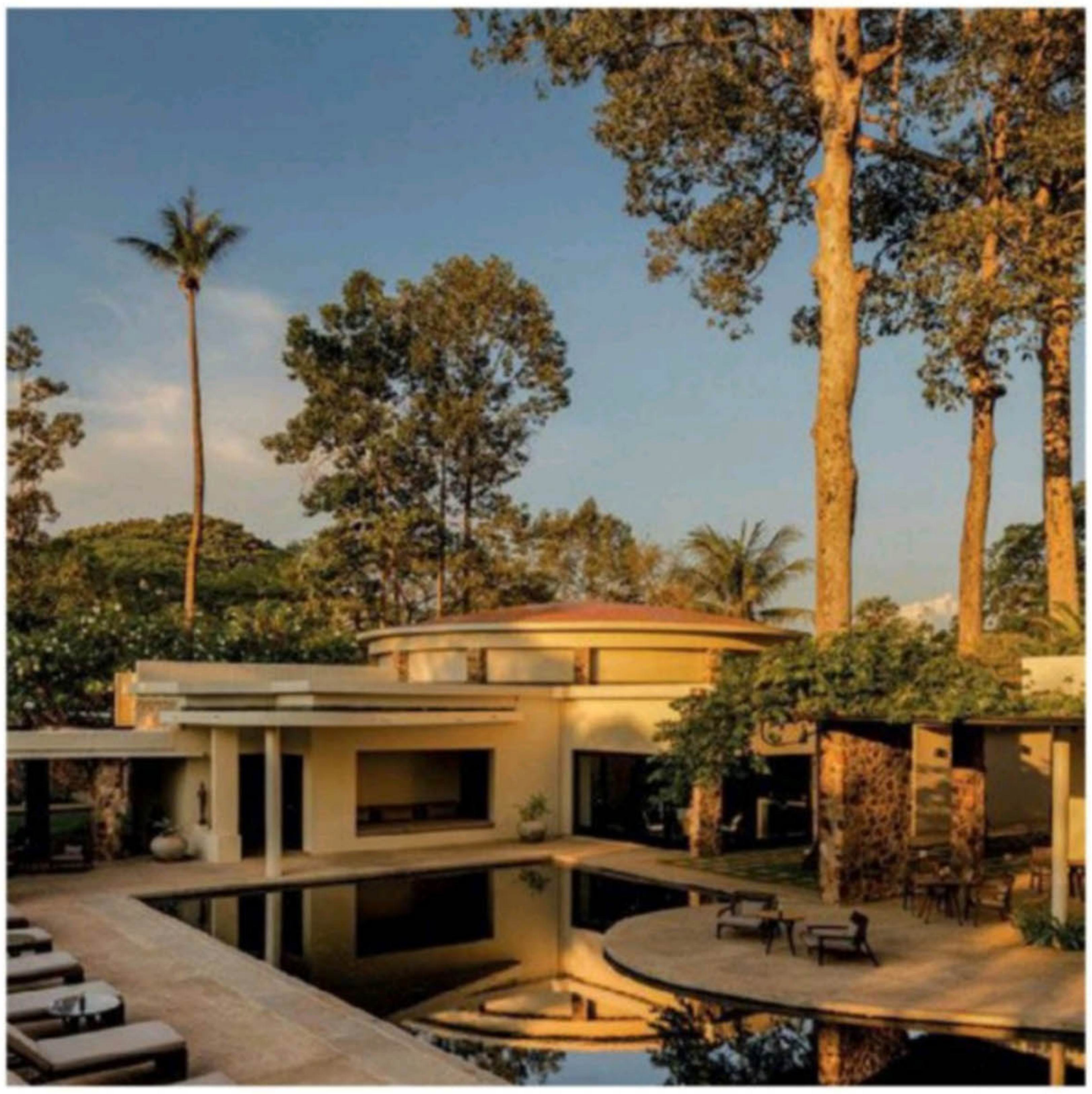


From top: Porto's famous Azulejos (c) Jure Tufekcik. The Douro Valley (c) Nota Bene.

Matera

The opening scene from the James Bond movie *No Time to Die* was filmed in Matera, one of the oldest inhabited cities in the world. Basilicata may be Italy's poorest county, and it is far from the madding crowd, but Matera is unmissable for the Unesco-protected area they refer to as The Sassi, with its unique cave dwellings, narrow alleyways and unrivalled atmosphere. It gets overrun by tourists, so we advise to arrive early, experience its magic and return to your base in Bernalda at Francis Ford Coppola's Palazzo Margherita, a favourite boutique hotel, 40 minutes away by car.

From top: Palazzo Margherita, a luxury hotel in Matera. A winding road in Matera.



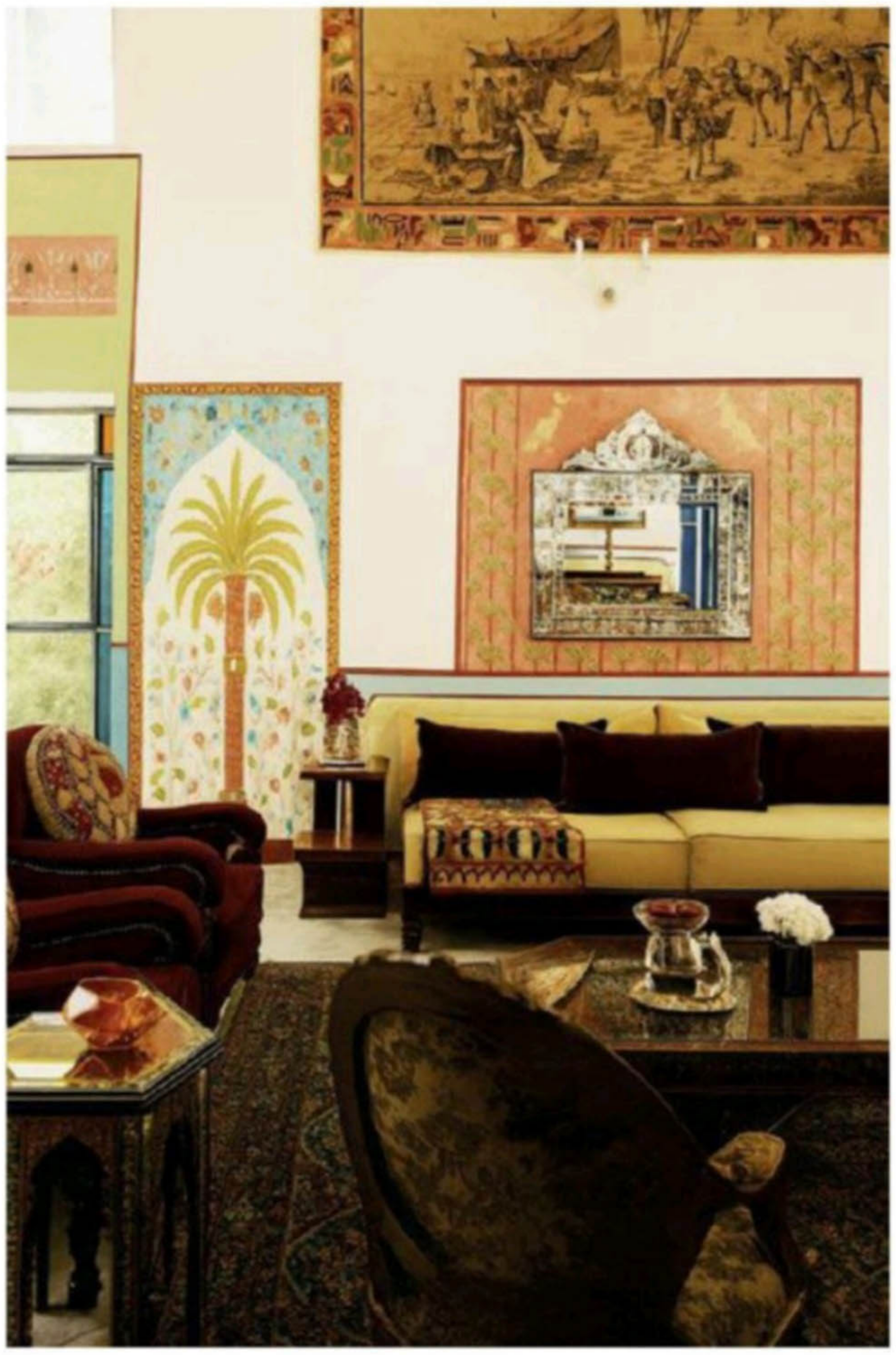
Angkor Wat

The eighth wonder of the world, a huge and magnificent Hindu-Buddhist temple complex, located at the outskirts of Siem Reap, Cambodia, is best seen at dawn through the eyes of an expert. Arriving through the rear access point shortly after 5am as the sun starts to rise and there are no crowds to interfere with the silence is very special. One of the highlights of a carefully curated trip through Southeast Asia, Siem Reap will offer insight into Khmer food and culture, as well as the ancient and modern-day history of Cambodia.

Top: Amansara in Siem Reap, near Angkor Wat. Below: Angkor Wat.

Giza

The Great Pyramid of Giza is recognised as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. A themed dinner here with musicians can be preceded by a private tour of the complex with an expert historian. The Egyptian odyssey continues to Aswan. Before boarding what is arguably the finest sailing yacht on the Nile, fly privately to see the historic twin temples of Abu Simbel before returning later in the day to the boat for a leisurely three-night cruise to Luxor. Disembark at Luxor for a stay at the incomparable Al Moudira, a gorgeous property with lots to see and do, including the Valley of the Kings, yet another Unesco World Heritage Site.



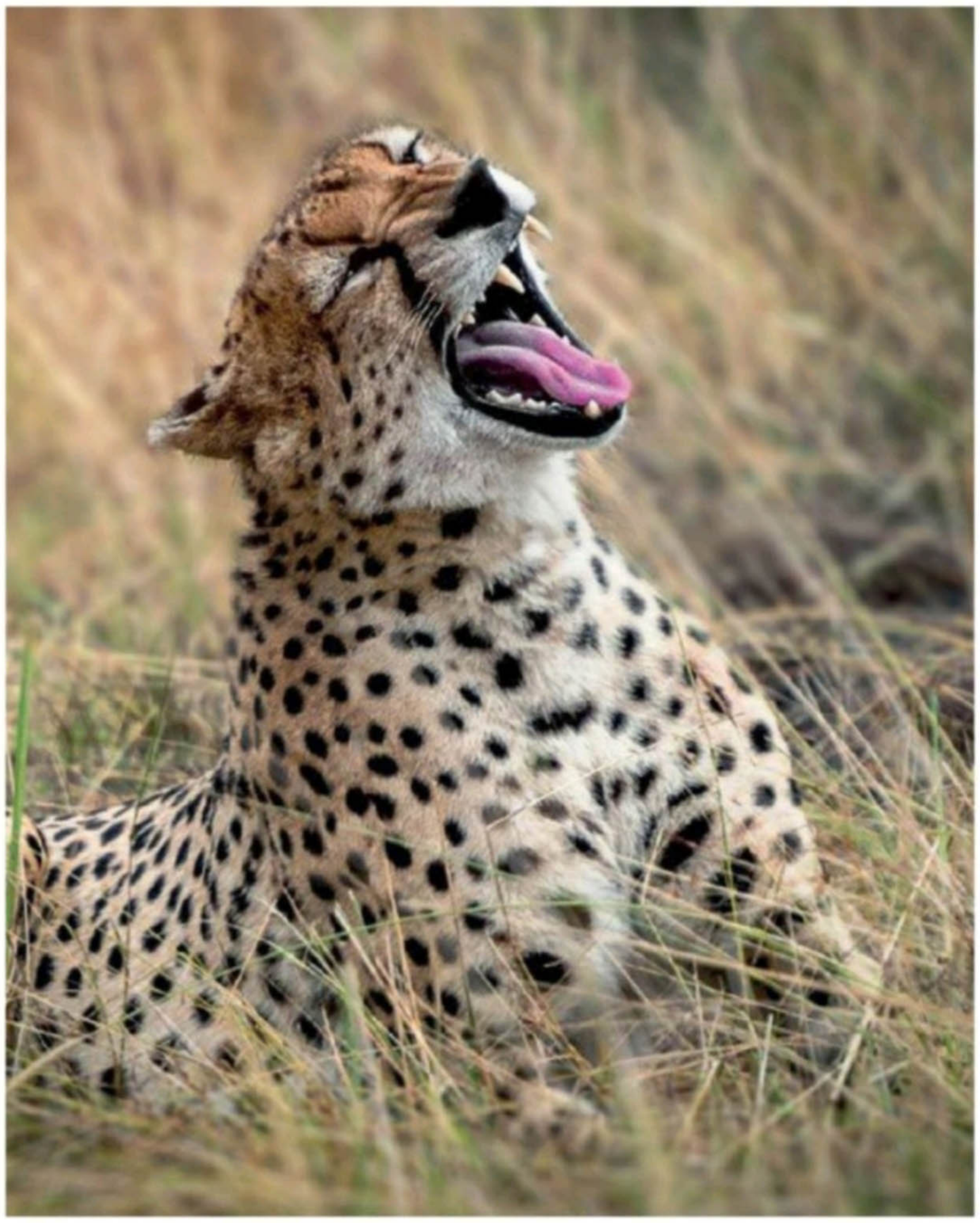
From top: The Great Pyramid of Giza. The glamorous Al Moudira in Luxor, situated near ancient Theban sites. A picnic by the Nile.

The Serengeti

Think *Out of Africa*, the film about Karen Blixen and her love for the landscapes and wildlife of East Africa, and you will have a vision of this special area of northern Tanzania. The vast plains of the Serengeti are teaming with lions, elephants and the African leopard. This huge national park is also the scene every summer of the unique annual migration of the wildebeest. Stay in a private house on an exclusive reserve with full retinue of staff, swimming pool, world-class cuisine and wines, and private rangers with jeeps for safari whenever one feels like venturing out into the bush. ◇

Anthony Lassman is founder of travel company Nota Bene.

From top: A safari (c) Dawn Westveld.
A relaxed cheetah (c) Hu Chen.



Far From The Madding Crowd

Two pioneering women are redefining the Marrakech travel experience with boutique hotels.

by Lisa Young

Left: Courtyard at Jnane Tamsna (c) Hind Lahrichi. Right: Ancient wooden door at Jnane Tamsna (c) Lisa Young.

A 20-minute drive from Marrakech's chaotic medina lies the peaceful Palmeraie neighbourhood, where a tranquil haven set among olive trees, date palms and fragrant, flower-lined courtyards tumbling with bougainvillea awaits.

A desert-dusty lane guides you towards the private estate of Jnane Tamsna, a home-from-home founded by visionary hotelier Meryanne Loum-Martin, a Senegalese-Parisian lawyer turned designer and author, and her husband, Dr Gary Martin, a US anthropologist and ethnobotanist and founder of the Global Diversity Foundation, a charity working with changemakers to help communities and environments flourish.

A pioneering successful businesswoman, Loum-Martin was the first Black woman ever to own a hotel in Morocco.

Slightly off-beat with bohemian touches, Jnane Tamsna, which opened its doors to guests in 2001, is a labour of love with a sense of community. African flair with an eclectic melange of chic styles flows throughout. The meticulously decorated home is not only a business but was created for its owners and reflects their personalities, mission and vision. If you want to escape the craziness of Marrakech's medina, Jnane Tamsna perfectly delivers.

It has become a haven for celebrities, writers and artists, and where Nobel and Booker Prize-winning authors visit regularly to hold writing masterclasses, retreats and workshops.

As the daughter of a diplomat, Loum-Martin's childhood was spent between France, England and Communist Russia.

While working as a lawyer in Paris, she visited Marrakech in December 1985 and immediately fell in love. Her parents wanted a holiday home and so she convinced them to allow her to buy land and build a home in the Palmeraie suburb. Visiting friends often spoke of their dissatisfaction with their Moroccan holidays and Loum-Martin soon realised there was a space in the market.

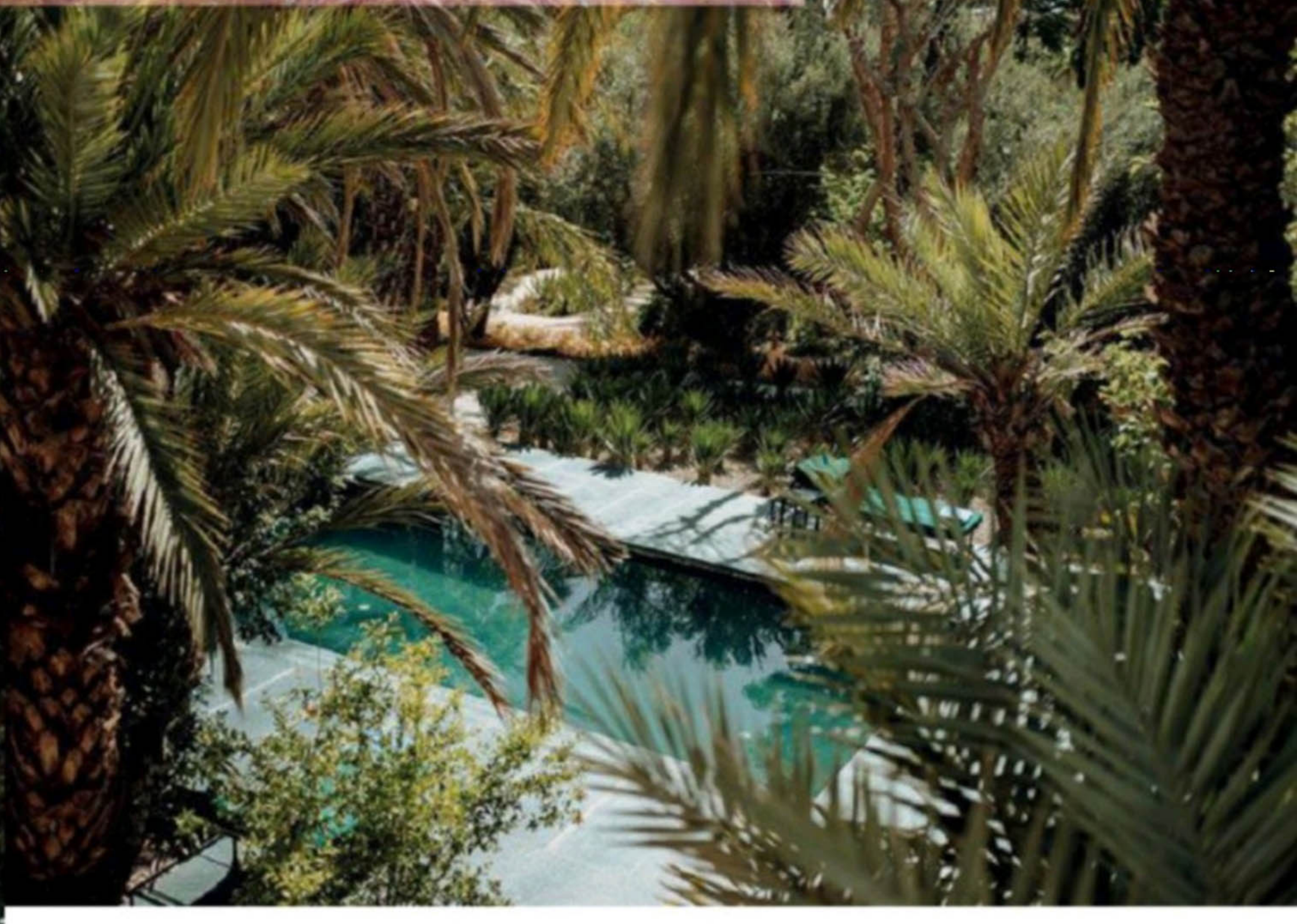
"I kept hearing negative things about where to stay. There were big resorts or hostels; nothing in between."

In 1989, with her parents' consent, she bought the neighbouring land, turned it into a unique luxury boutique rental business and called it Dar Tamsna; she described it as "a vision from the Bible; a beautiful green oasis".

Loum-Martin says: "I threw a themed 'oriental splendour' costume party on New Year's Eve 1989 and invited friends from all over the world. The invitation read: 'Even if you have flown 15 hours to get here, if you're not in costume, you can't get in.' Guests were dropped at the end of the asphalt road where they transferred to camels, donkeys and horses and arrived at the house via a dusty road and on

Clockwise from top left: Portrait of Meryanne Loum-Martin, founder of Jnane Tamsna (c) Lisa Young. Fireplace salon at Jnane Tamsna (c) Jean Cazals. Pool at Jnane Tamsna (c) Hannah Wilde Photography. Al fresco dinner table.

"In 1989, with her parents' consent, she bought the neighbouring land, turned it into a unique luxury boutique rental business and called it Dar Tamsna; she described it as 'a vision from the Bible; a beautiful green oasis'."
— Meryanne Loum-Martin.



four legs. I only wished I'd filmed it because it was extraordinary.

"Afterwards, all my friends knew I was starting a different type of luxury holiday rental, and they told their bosses, who were always looking for a place to treat their clients. That's how it started."

Between 1998 and 2000, now married with a family, Loum-Martin searched for land to create a purpose-built place for themselves and a hotel, which launched as Jnane Tamsna (Big Gardens) in 2001. The rest is history.

"As a seasoned traveller, I just created spaces that I would like to find when I was travelling myself. Spaces where the social connection over adventures, discovery and culture would fuel meaningful conversations at cocktail hour with people you were meeting for the first time, within a stylish and cosy atmosphere."

The landscaping was done by Loum-Martin's husband. In February 2025, Dr Martin received the Humanitarian Medal from King Charles for the foundation's outstanding work following the earthquake that hit Morocco in September 2023. The foundation has been supported from day one by Jnane Tamsna.

A narrow zig-zagging pathway leads through the impressive desert garden where heavily laden black olive trees, cactus, succulents, aloe and agave plants grow, some curling into themselves, almost hugging. A gentle wind wafts through the palms, rustling the branches and the umbrellas around the multiple swimming pools, where seductive lounge chairs entice guests to recline.

"People who come here want to meet the family; it really drives the place. Meryanne is the iconic figure, and our daughter is stepping into her shoes. People also come for the gardens and organic vegetables; that part of the story, behind the scenes, is where I come into play, and I'm very happy with that," says Dr Martin.

The heart and soul of this place is gathering people in a cultural space. "I believe that travel should be

Clockwise from left: Vanessa Branson (c) Lisa Young. Dining at El Fenn (c) Cecile Treal. Cocktails ©Mitchell van Voorbergen.

> *"We want El Fenn to be a place that people can come to and be themselves. We have never been worried about good taste: we've taken risks, and I hope people feel it when they come here."*
> *— Vanessa Branson.*

that changemaker in people's lives, and a place that facilitates that transformation is important," he adds.

There are five houses with 24 rooms varying in size, each with a swimming pool and a view of the snow-capped Atlas Mountains in the distance.

Behind the heavy carved wooden bedroom doors is an eclectic mix of treasures, from handpicked antiques, framed photos and works of art, mother-of-pearl inlaid chests and tables, and luscious daybeds. Every picture and piece of furniture has a story behind it and Loum-Martin is happy to reveal their interesting anecdotes. All rooms are decorated with a blend of rich colours, some boasting walk-in closets, fireplaces and private terraces. En-suite bathrooms dazzle with copper sinks and a natural indigenous tadelakt lime-based plaster finish.

Tantalising fusion cuisine from Morocco, Senegal, India and the Mediterranean include Dr Martin's organic herbs, vegetables and fruits that find their way into delicious daily recipes. Tables are set up outside on colourful patios, quiet alcoves surrounded by olive trees, candle-lit courtyards and rooftops. On cooler days, guests can retreat to the African-styled dining room.

El Fenn by Vanessa Branson

This ultra-chic boutique riad is liberally lathered in colour from top to bottom — brights and neutrals, lights and darks — with quirky furniture, fabulous lighting, rich textures, ancient Moroccan crafts and a splash of unique modern British art.

This vibrancy is unsurprising, considering the owner is Vanessa Branson, founder of the Vanessa Devereux Gallery (1986-91) and proud founder of Marrakech Biennale (which is focused on art, film and literature), and who clearly shares the same business gene as her brother, business tycoon Richard Branson.

There's a saying in Morocco that you don't choose a house, a house chooses you.

Buying El Fenn was a spontaneous decision. This extraordinary building started its life as a hotel 20 years ago when Branson and her business partner, Howell James, purchased the property on a whim. They both wanted a home-from-home in Marrakech, a cosy place that they could enjoy with friends.

"At the time, we wanted a little house for ourselves. We saw 10 riads: everything was in ruins. We walked into El Fenn and down a dark corridor opening into a courtyard that was completely and utterly disintegrating, but all the original windows and doors were there," says Branson.

"The first courtyard, with its extraordinary scale and proportions, was beautiful. It was too dangerous to walk into the rooms because all the floors had gone, and the roof had fallen in. We climbed up, but didn't have mobile phones then, so we tried to light a lighter to see where we were treading. It was so exciting and so beautiful."

As it was getting dark, Branson and Howell shook hands and agreed there and then to buy it. They've slowly expanded El Fenn over the years, buying the surrounding houses.

In 2004, El Fenn started life with six guest rooms, slowly evolving to the 42 oversized en suite rooms and luxury suites today.

When Branson bought El Fenn, her brother Richard had already purchased luxurious Kasbah Tamadot, located in the nearby Atlas Mountains. "When we bought El Fenn, Richard hadn't yet developed Tamadot into a hotel. We have always had a healthy competition with each other, a rivalry between brother and sister, and I think that's why El Fenn has such high standards."

El Fenn is right on the edge of Marrakech's chaotic and noisy medina, but the hotel's fortress-thick walls create an internal sanctuary where it's peaceful and quiet. The Moroccan decadence of this place induces a relaxing vibe, where in-house felines slink across cooling tiled courtyards before curling up on luxurious sofas under the shade of olive trees. There are quiet nooks throughout, ideal for meditative moments while sipping a soothing mint tea and listening to the muezzin's calming call to prayer.

Old wooden and stained-glass doors open into spacious guest rooms, where a vivid palette of uplifting, mood-enhancing colours have been used to decorate each unique room, from brilliant reds to vivid pinks, saffrons, beautiful blues and every shade of green, all spread throughout the various buildings. At the edge of every bed you'll find your own colourful medina-made leather slippers.

The crowning 1,300m roof terrace offers views of the city, including Djemaa el-Fna, the main square and marketplace in Marrakech. The rooftop is an ideal spot at sunset.

El Fenn's boutique embodies the spirit of Moroccan craftsmanship and is filled with a curated selection of colourful, stylish and locally created contemporary and vintage fashion, furniture, rugs, throws, cushions, jewellery, and style and design literature.

The crowning 1,300m roof terrace offers views of the city, including Djemaa el-Fna, the main square and marketplace in Marrakech. The rooftop is an ideal spot at sunset.

Branson is excited that Morocco is steeped in skilled handmade crafts. "There's no other country like it; everybody is stitching, crocheting or making something, and they have a natural sense for style and design, music, food and even massage."

Branson's choice of art is important to her. There's international artwork throughout the hotel, but recently she has been focusing on supporting local artists.

"It gives us an edge that other hotels might not have. I have been in the art world, and that's a different ingredient that we have here: real works of art on the wall that are good pieces and not just decoration," she says.

"We want El Fenn to be a place that people can come to and be themselves. We have never been worried about good taste: we've taken risks, and I hope people feel it when they come here." ◇

Clockwise from left: Rooftop bar area, El Fenn, Marrakech. In the distance is Djemaa el Fna ©Lisa Young. Corridor in El Fenn ©Lisa Young. Staff dropping rose petals into water in a courtyard at El Fenn (c) Lisa Young.

The Best is History

Villa Sigurtà, Italy, has inspired dignitaries and royalty down the centuries.

by Lisa Young

As modern as tomorrow, but with a foot firmly in the past, Villa Sigurtà, built in the 1690s in the small town of Valeggio sul Mincio in northern Italy, is a fully staffed 10-bedroom residence famous for its stately symmetry, Palladian architecture and fabulous frescoes.

Over centuries, the villa has hosted dignitaries and royalty, including King Charles III, Emperor Napoleon III, composer Antonio Vivaldi, violinist Yehudi Menuhin and opera singer Maria Callas, among many others. Luchino Visconti also made a movie here.

Villa Sigurtà, Italy (c) Lisa Young

Villa Sigurtà (c) Lisa Young

“King Charles III came to visit my grandmother for the day, and he looked around the garden. He knew every single plant — just remarkable.” — Count José Antonio Sigurtà.

Our host is Count José Antonio Sigurtà, a grounded, fun, and approachable aristocrat who inherited the property through his father and grandfather Count Carlo Sigurtà, who purchased the villa in 1941. The villa is represented exclusively by agents Tuscany Now and More, and has recently become available as a holiday rental.

On my first morning I awoke to the gentle sounds of birdsong drifting through my bedroom window. I was in Villa Leandra, one of three luxurious guesthouses on the villa’s estate. Outside were a private terrace and plunge pool.

I made my way to the main villa for breakfast with José Antonio and his family, to find the dining-room table laden with delicious food. The walls and surrounding surfaces were covered with mementoes from previous Sigurtà generations.

Family is at the core of this place. “Everything you see in this room is from my family’s travels, everything has a story, like this old camera bought in Luxor by my grandfather,” José Antonio explained.

After breakfast, a tour of the huge grounds gave José Antonio a chance to show off the parklands, cultivated since the 17th century. They include Italy’s first pre-Romantic English garden, ranked among the nation’s most important gardens by the Ministry of Culture.

Willows, Lebanese cedars, Roman pines and oak trees grow here in abundance, along with hydrangeas, lotus flowers, papyrus grass, water lilies and purple wisteria. The huge box shrubs in the 300-year-old Buxus Garden reminded Queen Victoria Eugénie of Spain of a herd of elephants.

“King Charles III came to visit my grandmother for the day, and he looked around the garden. He knew every single plant — just remarkable,” José Antonio told me.

A pathway leads through the garden to the Maffei Nymphaeum, an enchanting amphitheatre with a large swimming pool, fountain, waterfalls and tropical aquatic plants. The fairytale setting inspired Baroque composer Vivaldi and dramatist Scipione Maffei, who owned the house at the time, to write La Fida Ninfa (The Faithful Nymph).

A huge 400-year-old ginkgo tree takes a prominent position in the centre of the lawn. “This tree was one of the first brought to Europe from Japan, and it is now the biggest in Europe. We believe in the power of this tree because it has very good energy. Sometimes we embrace it,” José Antonio smiled.

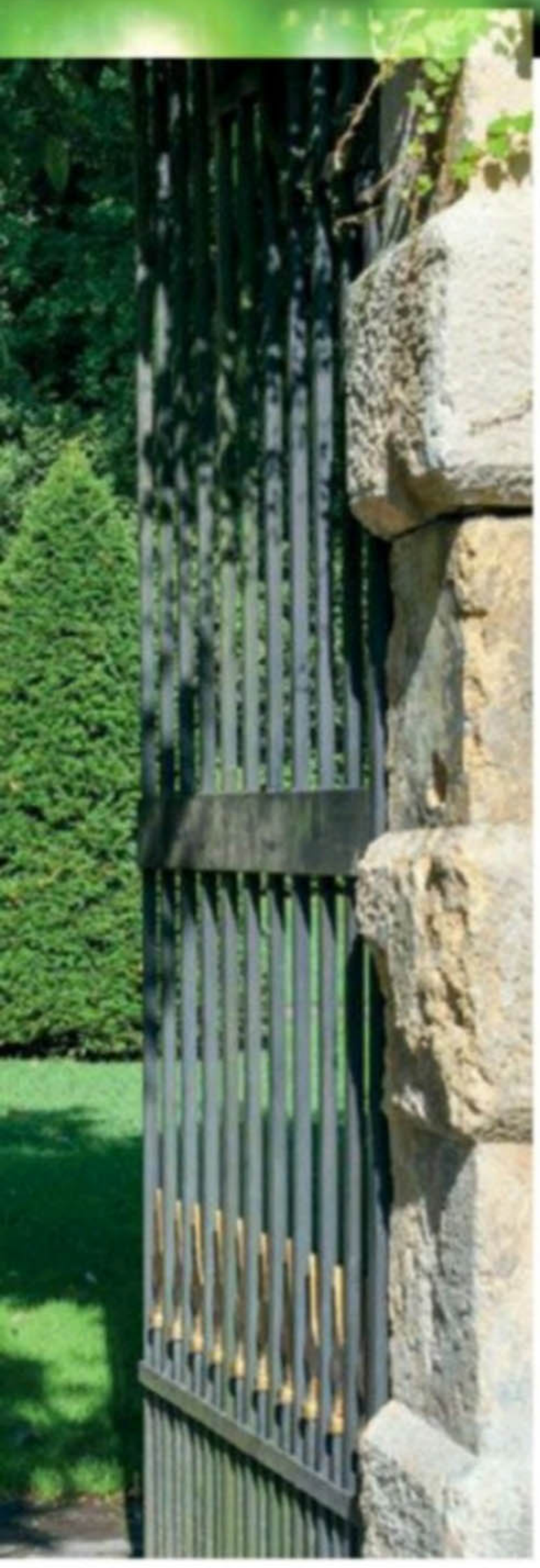
Back inside, the tour continued throughout the villa. The ground-floor living space centres on the Salone degli Ambasciatori, an expansive living room with terrazzo floors and large plush green velvet sofas. Once the meeting place for diplomats negotiating the Treaty of Villafranca, it is now an inviting family room. Connected to it are other cosy living spaces, and a sitting room that was once the Emperor of Austria’s private office. Family photographs are dotted throughout the impressive villa.

A dining room, the Salone della Caccia, seats up to 20 people and is adorned with frescoes of the family’s dogs. The ground floor also houses a large kitchen, where chef and staff prepare daily meals. Steps leading to the villa gardens and outdoor seating overlook the gigantic, huggable ginkgo tree.

An impressive staircase adorned with sculptures and fine ceiling frescoes leads up to the first floor’s upper stateroom, the Salone di Napoleone, dedicated to Napoleon III. It showcases an antique Steinway grand piano, powder-blue walls with trompe l’oeil artistry and huge fantastical coral sculptures by Tony Duquette that were originally designed for a villa party. Large burnt orange, crimson and pink chairs offer the perfect perch. Branching off the main room is a low-lit billiard room, then another room dedicated to artists with a connection to the house, such as Yehudi Menuhin, “the best violinist ever”, according to José Antonio.

As the evening drew on, we dined on exquisite risotto with Valpolicella and Monte Veronese cheese, followed by veal cheek with glazed carrots and polenta, topped off with Villafranca millefeuille with mascarpone cream. We also savoured the products of the villa’s private vineyard, including a Conti Sigurtà Custoza Doc 2022, a Corvina Veronese IGT 2022 and a Rosato Verona IGT 2020. All were delightful.

A huge 400-year-old ginkgo tree takes a prominent position in the centre of the lawn. “This tree was one of the first brought to Europe from Japan, and it is now the biggest in Europe. We believe in the power of this tree because it has very good energy. Sometimes we embrace it.”
— Count José Antonio Sigurtà.



Top: Count José Antonio, owner of Villa Sigurtà. Gateway leading to Garden path to the Maffei Nymphaeum (c) Villa Sigurtà

Left: Fan room, room details at Villa Sigurtà, Top: The famous tortellini at Alla Borsa Restaurant, in the pretty, local town of Valeggio sul Mincio, both (c) Lisa Young.

"We dedicate our days to making people fall in love with food. We think food is edible love. This is why we call our legendary tortellino the 'love knot,' good food enhances the spirit."
— Nadia Pasquali, master chef.

Outside the grand gated entrance there's much to complement a stay. One can attend Verona's annual operatic festival (Arena di Verona, which lasts for three months during the summer), take an excursion to Lake Garda, spend a couple of days visiting estates, castles, palaces and Palladian villas, such as the spectacular Palazzo Te in Mantua, sample a pasta making masterclass, stroll to the quaint village of Borghetto sul Mincio for a seafood dinner while overlooking the rippling Mincio River, and go horse riding and for bicycle excursions. Slightly further afield to the west is Venice, or travel east to Milan, south to Bologna, southwest to Verona, or north to the Italian Alps.

I took a boat tour of Lake Garda, which included a luncheon stop at picturesque Punta San Vigilia, a charming lakeside restaurant, and a favourite of Sir Winston Churchill. Since 1540, artists, poets and philosophers have been inspired by its magic. We dined al fresco under vines that provided shelter from the sun.

The following morning, I took a short walk to nearby Ristorante Alla Borsa for a masterclass in tortellini making with master chef Nadia Pasquali. During spring and summer, people come to the village for the famous 'love knot' pasta made by Nadia and her family: she has even made tortellino for the pope.

"We dedicate our days to making people fall in love with food. We think food is edible love. This is why we call our legendary tortellino the 'love knot,'" Nadia told me. "Good food enhances the spirit."

I can't disagree. The excellent hospitality shown throughout my visit was second to none. The villa brings a calming happiness and relaxation to those who pass through its historic doors.

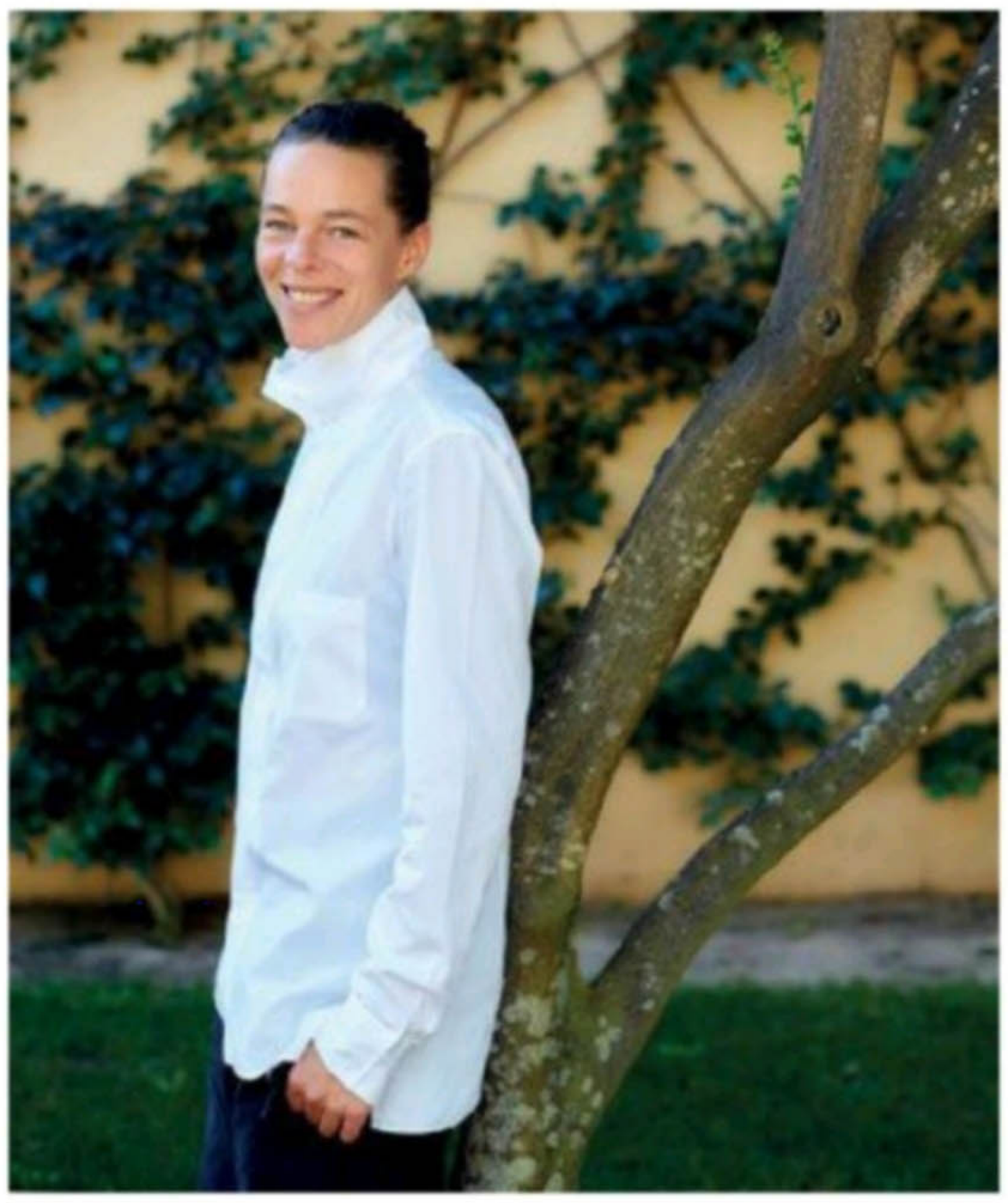
"The energy in this place is important; it's relaxing and inspiring. It inspired my grandfather, it inspired Maffei and it inspired Napoleon III when he declared, "Je m'arrête ici" and decided to stop the Second Italian War of Independence in 1859 while residing at Villa Sigurtà. Maybe he felt relaxed here and that's why he stopped it here," José Antonio concluded.

If only these walls could talk. ◇

Creation Story

The Algarve's Vila Joya is more than just a food and wine connoisseurs' dream.

by Clara Le Fort



Top: Portrait of Joy Jung, owner and creative lead of Vila Joya, founded in the 80s by her mother. Right: Creativity comes in many forms at Vila Joya.

On the coast of Algarve, second-generation family-run Vila Joya was the first restaurant in Portugal to be awarded two Michelin stars. More than just a food and wine connoisseurs' dream, it is home to beautiful gardens, breathtaking views and simple understated elegance. It was founded in 1982 by German-born Claudia Jung. Since 2003, Claudia's daughter Joy has managed Vila Joya.

The boutique hotel mixes French Riviera vibes with Balinese peacefulness. The North African sarouals worn by staff complement evocative Moorish interiors, richly sculpted Indian lounge chairs, fragile ceramic-sculpted surfaces and creative artworks.

"Vila Joya was bought by the Jungs in 1979 when the property sat in the middle of nowhere. There were no roads, no running water and no electricity back then, it opened its doors in 1982 as a stylish hideaway created by Claudia, an interior designer ahead of her time."
— Joy Jung.

“Heritage is a burden and a gift,” says Joy Jung. “The house was named after me, and all memories lead back to it as we spent all school holidays here. Deep inside me, I knew I would end up here. I was quite fond of taking reservations, which my mum let me do,” adds Jung. Tragically, in 1997, her mother passed away due to cancer.

Vila Joya was bought by the Jungs in 1979 when the property sat in the middle of nowhere. “There were no roads, no running water and no electricity back then,” says Jung. It opened its doors in 1982 as a stylish hideaway created by Claudia, an interior designer ahead of her time. “She understood that back in the 1980s that great restaurants lacked a place to stay, which she found annoying when the wine list was expansive; and that great hotels usually served poor food,” says Jung.

From 1982, the menu changed daily, offering long-staying guests creativity and choice. The hiring of Austrian chef Dieter Koschina in 1991 set the first stone of a stellar gastronomic odyssey. He says: “Look at the ocean, it’s forever the same and always different. The same goes for the menu. I look at the quality of the products, and only then think about the idea that is going to spark from it. Every night, the chefs meet and talk and decide what we will cook the next day.”

On a summer’s evening, the dinner, impeccably set on the terrace facing the sunset, features a few choreographed amuse-bouches. Presented on a Kaviari box, a light and fluffy potato zeppelin comes filled with sour cream and topped with a quenelle of caviar. An earthy breeze from the sea. A trio of smile bites follows: a crimson-red tuna tartar served in a raw-beetroot taco; a flower composed of smoked salmon layered with chives and horseradish; and

Left: Rich crafts and spectacular art pieces make each room and suite perfectly unique.

Right: Creative display of Japanese wooden tablets personalised by the Vila Joya staff.

a shot of yellow tomato gazpacho freshened with a dash of melon yuzu sorbet. Then, what looks like a green olive on a parmesan sable from the outside is revealed as a recomposed green-olive skin, doubled with a heart of fresh goat cheese; a tasty nod to the Mediterranean terroir.

Picking up the pace, a gentle ballet starts around the table, presenting us with a Japanese-inspired sashimi and tartar of mackerel enhanced with a red shiso vinaigrette and daikon. Soon after, an exotic twist on lobster: perfectly seared and sliced, the pink flesh is presented with matching mango and pineapple cubes, bathed in a passion-fruit hollandaise with hints of tamarind sauce and coconut cream. A turbot filet follows, artfully hidden under a few chips topped with black garlic pesto. The white fish is paired with a duo of leek purée and a leek vinaigrette and presented with an anchovy and caper shellfish tortilla. The dinner ends with a grouper fillet served in a Champagne emulsion with a celery ravioli and fresh tomato concassé. Time after time, the balance of textures and flavours come as a delightful surprise. The numerous wine glasses — in different shapes — nicely cluttering up the table echo sommelier Arnaud Vallet and his team's brilliant selection of Portuguese wines.

At Vila Joya Sea, the hotel's vibrant white shack meets beach restaurant, the décor changes every year: inspired one summer by wish plates from Japanese temples, it reinvents itself with dozens of small hanging Chinese red lanterns the next. Floating in the breeze, they hint at the talent of Brazilian chef Rafael Oyama. Of Japanese descent, he brings pan-Asian flavours enhanced with a tropical touch to the counter.

Leaving the whitewashed modern-day beach delight behind, one reaches the manicured gardens. By the

> *"I believe in the spirit of the place. The moment guests drive in, through what appears like an underwhelming door, they feel they have stepped into a bubble that doesn't belong to the Algarve."*
> *— Joy Jung.*

Top: The shore restaurant brings the talent of Brazilian chef of Japanese descent Rafael Oyama forward. Below, a plate of freshly prepared sashimi served with shiso leaves and freshly grated wasabi.

> *"At Vila Joya Sea, the hotel's vibrant white shack meets beach restaurant, the décor changes every year: inspired one summer by wish plates from Japanese temples, it reinvents itself with dozens of small hanging Chinese red lanterns the next."*
> *— Joy Jung.*

pool, a 'flying chefs' concept welcomes Mexican chef Hiram González for the third year in a row. Born in Guadalajara, his cuisine stands as the most modern, and freshest, expression of Mexican cuisine. Clean, precise and delicate, the tuna tostada comes in the form of a handmade tortilla topped with prime-grade tuna sashimi, perfectly ripe slices of avocado and a touch of chipotle mayonnaise. In the ceviche, slices of raw yellowtail are highlighted by a citrusy broth, a dash of green oil, coriander leaves and crunchy maize. Mind, palate and body instantly travel across the Atlantic.

"I believe in the spirit of the place," says Jung. "The moment guests drive in, through what appears like an underwhelming door, they feel they have stepped into a bubble that doesn't belong to the Algarve." Her creativity adds to the feeling. In the bar area, on the tables, as well as on countless shelves, colourful wooden sculptures seem to carry with them a special aura. "I met the Portuguese artist by coincidence, in the north of Portugal where he sat in a cave, literally surrounded by thousands of pieces. The more I look at them today and the more I realise they are more than pieces. Each one nails a character, a personality or even an attitude. The one he made of chef Koschina riding his bike even includes a Michelin star," she adds.

"One thing I know for sure today is that hospitality swallows you up if you have it in your blood and love it. It never stops," says Jung. ◇

www.vilajoya.com

A Michelin-star chef at the helm of Vila Joya for 30 years, Austrian-born Dieter Koschina draws inspiration from the seasons.

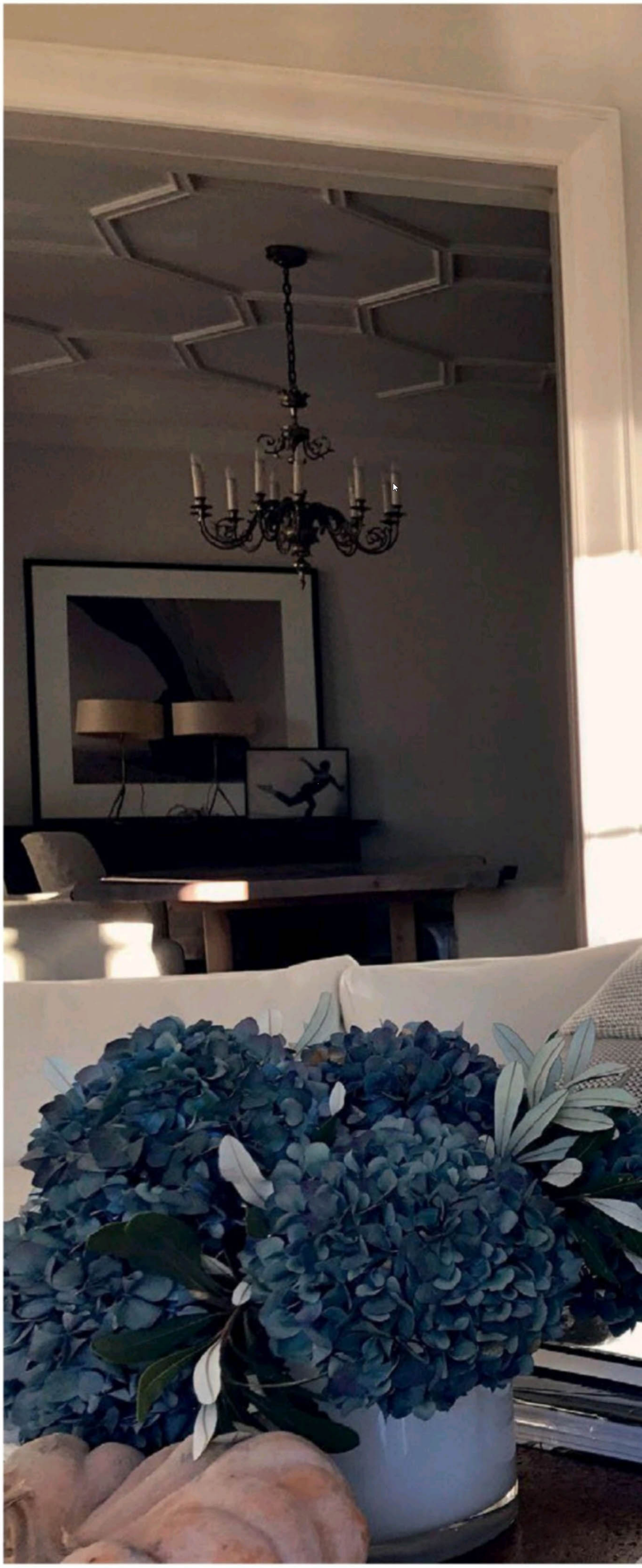
ART AS IDENTITY

“Nature is not only all that is visible to the eye… it also includes the inner pictures of the soul.”
— Edvard Munch

The Living Image

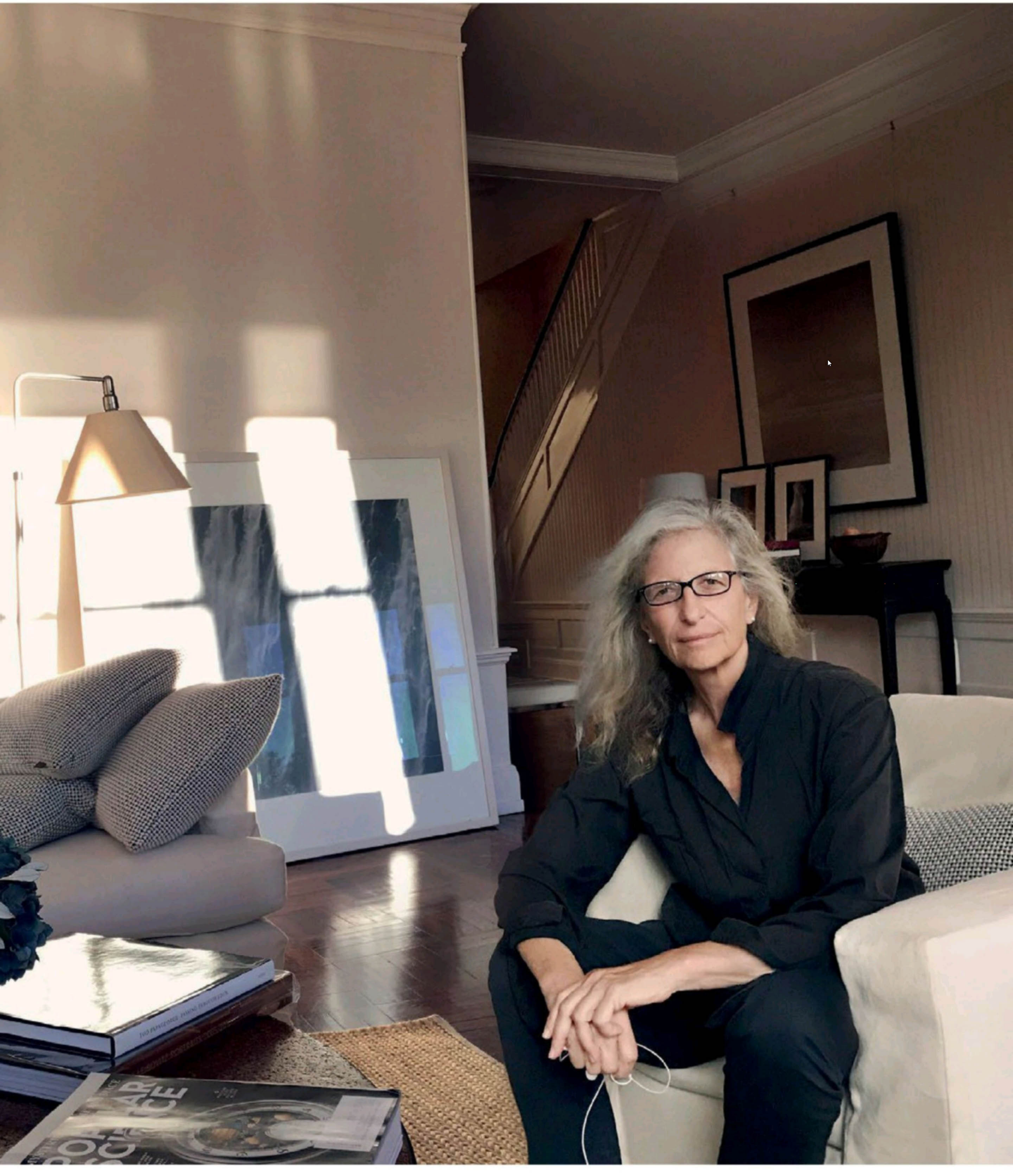
US photographer Annie Leibovitz looks back on half a century behind the lens.

by Y-Jean Mun-Delsalle



Annie Leibovitz has spent more than five decades framing the faces, places and moments that define modern culture. From her early days at Rolling Stone capturing the raw energy of the 1970s to cinematic portraits for Vanity Fair and Vogue that reinvented celebrity photography, her images have balanced intimacy and theatricality, the personal and the iconic.

Leibovitz has photographed everyone from Keith Haring, Tom Hanks and Rihanna to Nelson Mandela and Queen Elizabeth II. Now her lens has also turned toward landscapes, interiors and objects that hold the weight of history in her latest exhibition, Stream of Consciousness, which runs until September 27, 2025 at Hauser & Wirth Monaco.



Annie Leibovitz, New York City, 2017
Courtesy of the artist and Hauser & Wirth.

Forgoing her usual chronological sequencing, the solo show creates unexpected dialogues between images: James Turrell's Roden Crater in Arizona rubbing shoulders with Martha Graham's warehouse in New York, or Stephen Hawking sharing space with Abraham Lincoln's top hat. It's a fluid, intuitive approach that reflects her restless curiosity and engagement with her craft. At 75, Leibovitz is still shaping the visual record of our time — and still asking what comes next.

Do you see yourself more as an artist or a photographer?

I'm an artist and a photographer; I can't separate them. I'm proud to be both. I use photography and it has so many aspects to it. I've had the opportunity to have a long time to work with it. I've been influenced heavily by people such as David Hockney and Richard Avedon, who took a lot of heat for doing different kinds of things. He was definitely an artist. Why wouldn't someone want to develop all these different ideas that photography has to offer? Especially digitally now, there's a whole new set of possibilities that are fascinating to me. I love it all. I've been privileged to work with all these ideas.

> *"I'm an artist and a photographer; I can't separate them. I'm proud to be both. I use photography and it has so many aspects to it."*
> *— Annie Leibovitz.*

Left: Annie Leibovitz, Georgia O'Keeffe's red hill, Ghost Ranch, New Mexico, 2010, 2024. From Top: Annie Leibovitz, James Turrell's Roden Crater, Arizona, 2024 Below: Annie Leibovitz, Michael Heizer's City, Garden Valley, Nevada, 2023.2024

Installation view, 'Annie Leibovitz. Stream of Consciousness,' Hauser & Wirth Monaco, 2025 © Annie Leibovitz Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth (c)Philippe Fitte.

“All my work when I assemble it for a show is usually done in chronological order because I really am dealing with time every single day, so it was interesting to maybe think about the work out of order. It was definitely a stretch for me, but I really loved it. I’m very interested in process. I love process.” — Annie Leibovitz.

You’ve consistently returned to landscapes, interiors and still life. What draws you to these quieter subjects?
The landscapes came from looking for locations for people. Imagine going to photograph Bloomsbury’s Charleston farm or Virginia Woolf’s home — you’re looking at these places and they’re all sort of, I don’t like to call them backgrounds, but they began to develop as their own world. You can’t really separate all these things from each other. I think it’s more present in the Hauser & Wirth show because I let it rise to the surface, but it’s there all the time — I see like that. What was interesting about Stream of Consciousness is that I have so much work at this point that I began to see the imagery of the pictures talking to each other. There’s a whole other language that has developed with the collection of work, and that interests me. All my work when I assemble it for a show is usually done in chronological order because I really am dealing with time every single day, so it was interesting to maybe think about the work out of order. It was definitely a stretch for me, but I really loved it. I’m very interested in process. I love process.

Do you think about your archives chronologically, or more freely, like in Stream of Consciousness?
They have followed a strict chronology. I believe it’s important to see things in order because it gives you the best story — you’re not making it up; it’s just the way it is. I’m beginning to work on a set of archive books that will start off chronologically, but they may very well end up more like Stream of Consciousness. There’s just too much work and too many years not to use that idea of chronology. I’ve always used it, except

for this one moment in the Hauser & Wirth show, but I think it's important to stay the course.

Over the years, you've moved from photojournalism into portraiture and now more personal work. How do you view that evolution?

I'm a big fan of photography. It has so many ways to use it and I never wanted to be cornered into one style. When you start to look at what has accumulated, you need to take care of the work, you need to understand it. Bea Feitler told me you need to look back to go forward. I've always had a personal point of view, even in journalism. I put journalism to the side and realised that having a point of view gave you a bigger voice and you could say more.

What do you see as your role in society?

I'm documenting my time and my life. I try to incorporate what's going on and where we are right now. It's a very difficult time in the world, and I've been trying to figure out what next steps I can take to contribute to making things better. ◇

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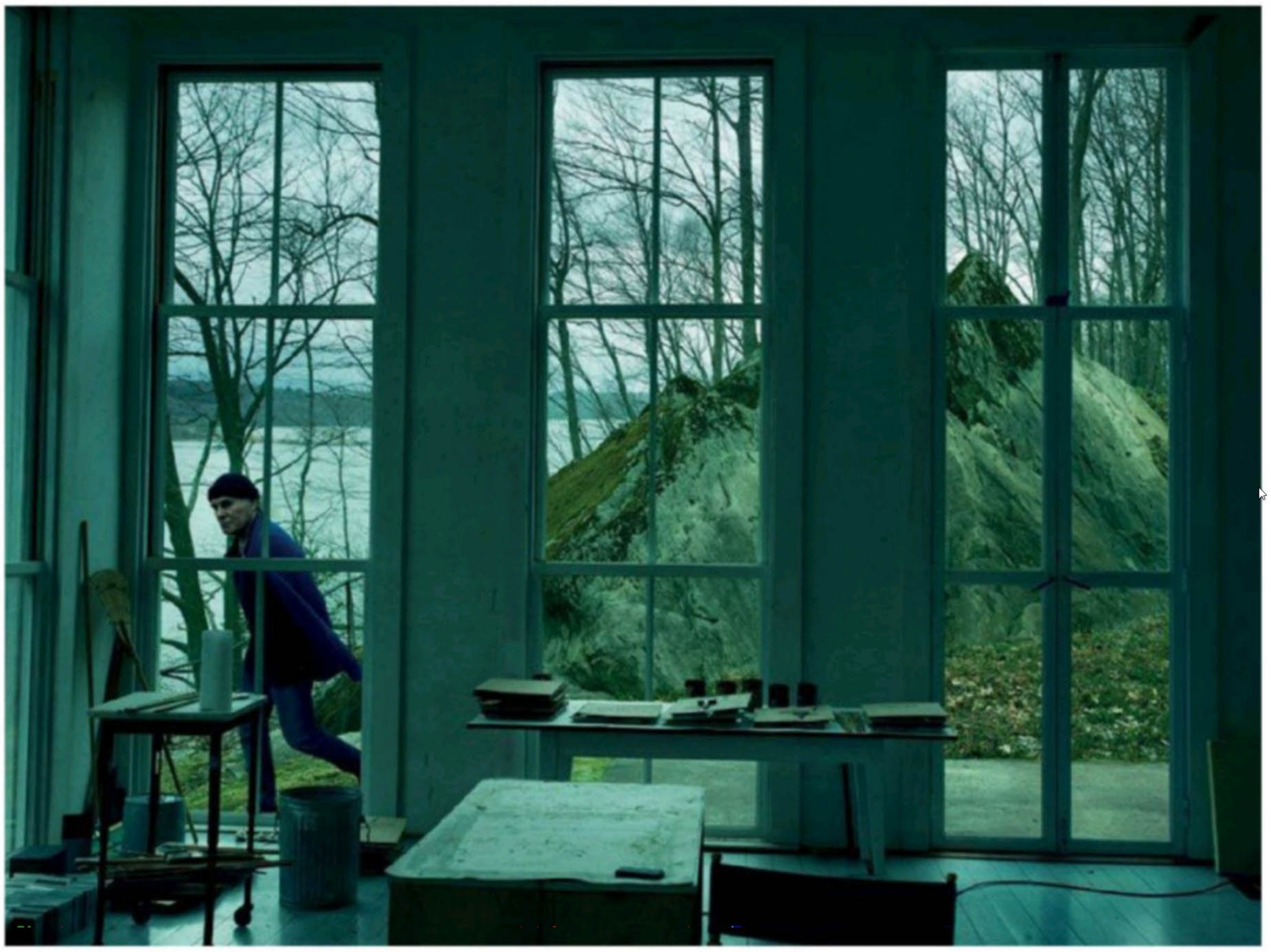
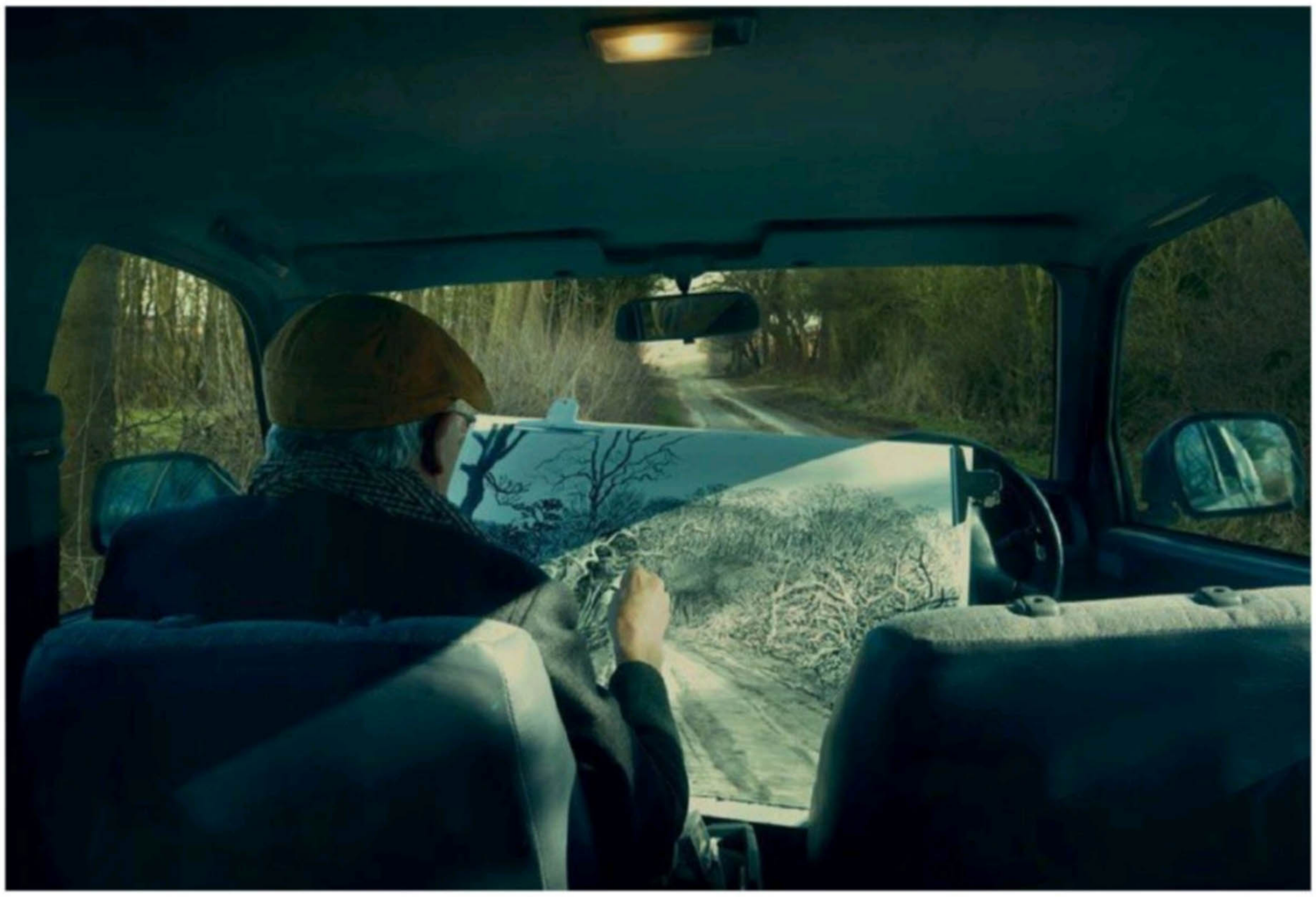
> *— Annie Leibovitz.*





Left: Annie Leibovitz, Edward Hopper's childhood home, Nyack, 2024.
Right from top: Annie Leibovitz, Brice Marden's studio, Tivoli, Upstate New York 2024.
Annie Leibovitz, David Hockney, Bridlington, East Yorkshire, England, 2013, 2024.

Quayola exhibiting/performing at the
Futur 21 Festival - Oberhausen.

Hellenic Hybrid

At the nexus of art and technology, Davide Quayola wields the machine as a potent artistic medium.

by Josh Sims

Artists explore many different media, but only a few produce their work using ultra high-definition cameras, next-generation scanners, or Lidar, light detection and ranging, a remote-sensing tech that uses laser pulses to build 3D models of the environment. Indeed, fewer still use generative software to create deeply immersive, cinematic images like those of Davide Quayola.

“I was 14 and messing about with my older brother’s computer when it clicked then that it could maybe be used to make a new kind of art,” says Quayola, who was born Davide Quayola, a 43-year-old Italian multi-media artist. He’s been busy lately choosing huge boulders of lava from the side of Mount Vesuvius, ready for them to be carved by industrial robots. “What was exciting to me was that it felt like there was something truly new about it. Back then, the idea of using a computer to do [visual artistic] things didn’t really exist.”

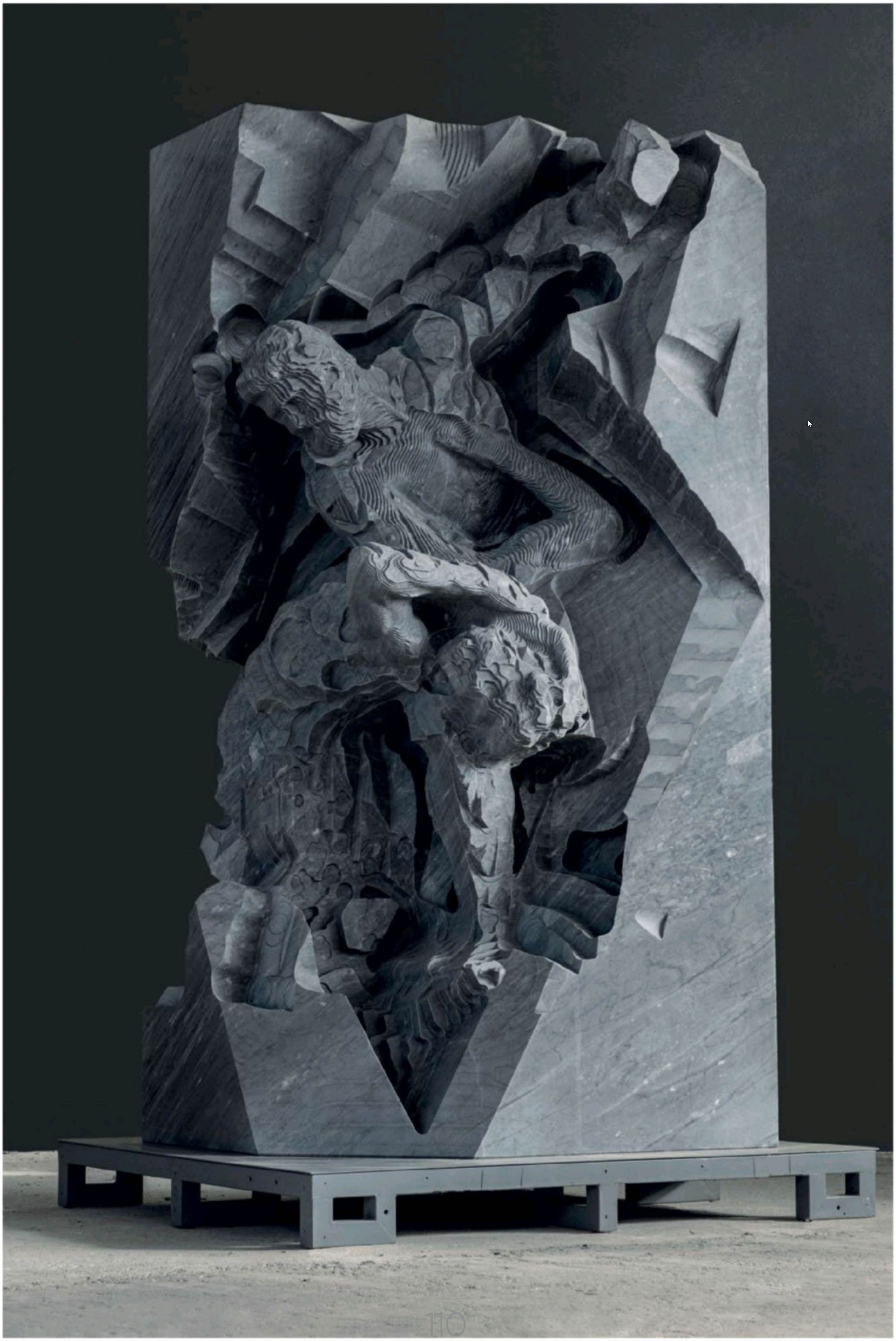
That would come with its own challenges: even the most contemporary art institutions were reluctant to accept that technology might be a potent artistic medium. “Now tech mediates almost everything we do,” says Quayola, and his work, often part performance, evolving in real time, has been exhibited at the V&A and the National Art Centre in Tokyo, but also at Ars Electronica and the Sundance Film Festival. Earlier this year, Quayola was selected to project an audio-visual piece onto the frontage of Gaudi’s Casa Batlló in Barcelona, as part of the World Heritage Site’s annual art programme.

Indeed, Quayola’s work stands out less for exploring the potential of technology as a tool, and more for its being the result of what he considers to be a collaboration with the technology. He will, for example, commission the writing of a piece of software without any fixed idea of what artistic output may follow; that comes only after months of pushing at and revealing its limitations.

“The work is more about the documenting of a personal interaction with technology that leads to a series of findings,” he says. “It’s only when you spend enough

Right: Raw material selection and extraction in collaboration with Adolfo Corsi e Successori at a historical Carrara marble quarry. Left: Performative installations: industrial robots live-milling new sculptures during an exhibition.

"I was 14 and messing about with my older brother's computer when it clicked then that it could maybe be used to make a new kind of art. What was exciting to me was that it felt like there was something truly new about it. Back then, the idea of using a computer to do [visual artistic] things didn't really exist."
— Davide Quayola.



> *"The work is more about the documenting of a personal interaction with technology that leads to a series of findings. It's only when you spend enough time with the tech that the good ideas arise."*
> *— Davide Quayola.*

time with the tech that the good ideas arise. You put something into the tech, and it gives something back. It's using tech as a different pair of eyes. And machines can help us see things in ways that are not human." It's much, he contends, like the Impressionists used brush and paint to investigate new ways of seeing and representing the world.

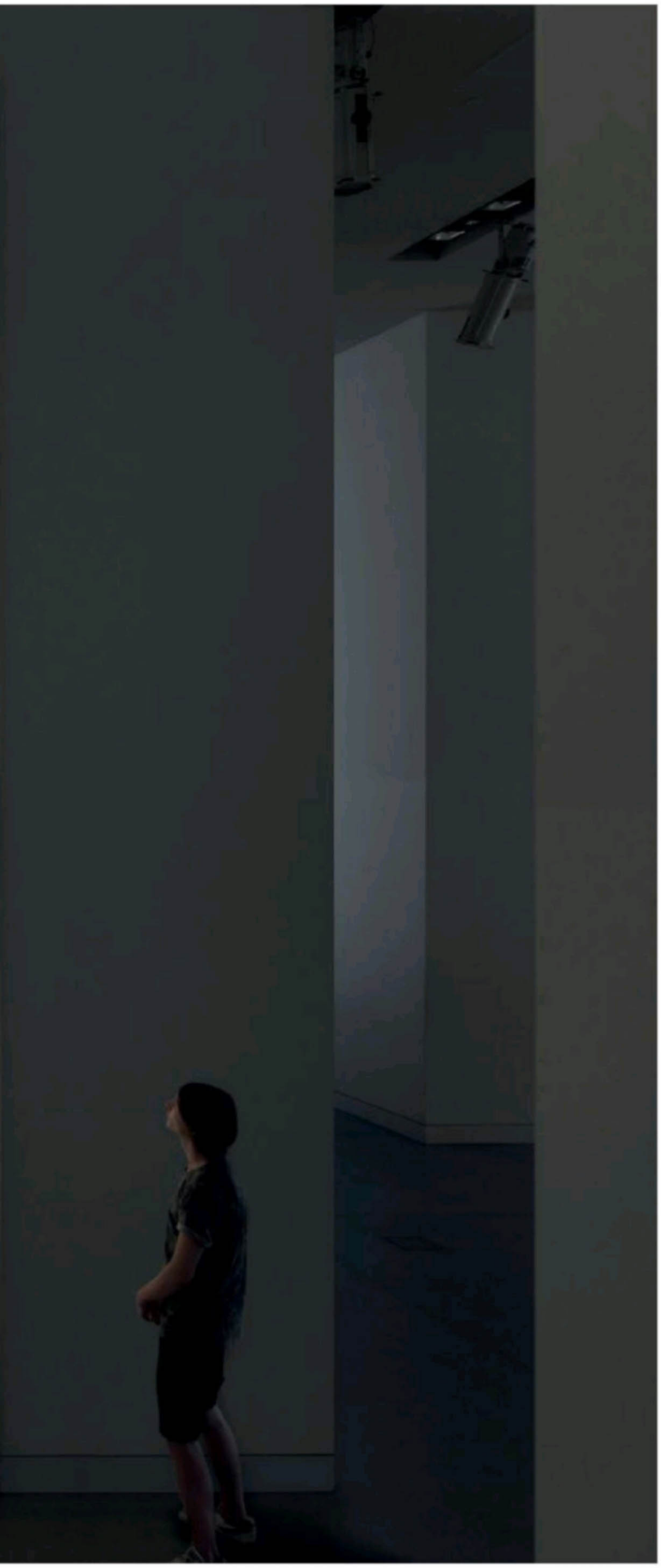
What Quayola calls his "machinic observations" are layered with meaning that, he concedes, can be deeply self-referential. Despite his technological leanings, many of his pieces are expressions of nature and natural forms. "Nature as a vehicle for discovering something new is universal [in art], but tech gives you a new way of seeing it," he says. But one of his 'landscapes' would be a painting of a technological function that describes a landscape, which is, of course, itself a representation.

To get to that point isn't just a question of switching on the machine and letting it fly though. After all, he notes, a piece of tech might be able to produce countless millions of iterations of a single idea. It still takes human intervention to give any piece what might be called its artistic soul. "There has to be a human element at the centre of the process, some intervening with the tech's operation, using your gut feeling to make decisions," he says.

Does technology provide untapped potential for artistic creativity? Quayola reckons we're only just starting to scratch the surface, arguing that, for example, it's taken the best part of a century to fully understand what expression a film camera is capable of channelling. Finding the art in tech takes time, and there's more and more tech to consider.

Not, curiously, that he's the geeky kind to rush to the very latest tech in childish excitement. You won't find him pounding the aisles of Las Vegas's gigantic Consumer Electronics Show every year. Quite the

Left: 'Hercules and Nessus'.
Right: Quayola (c) GioeleVettraino



"I think that maybe the more machines make things called art the more there will be a shift back to the human, because art is about us trying to express the inexplicable. Art relates to things you can't fully describe or fully measure."
— Davide Quayola.

opposite, in fact. While he describes himself as an optimist with regards to what technology can bring, he also understands better than many its limitations, especially when it's allowed to make 'art' itself.

"I think that maybe the more machines make things called art the more there will be a shift back to the human, because art is about us trying to express the inexplicable. Art relates to things you can't fully describe or fully measure," says Quayola. "In fact, I do see the artist's role here as being to apply the brakes in some way. Technology moves incredibly fast now and the danger is that it becomes too distanced from artistic ideas. And those tend to move very slowly. Or at least they do for me." ◇

Botanical Alchemy

Artist Shota Suzuki turns the art of metalsmithing into the most delicate of floral crafts.

by Sophie Richard

Left: Shota Suzuki. Right: Shota Suzuki , The Magnolia Branch, detail Silver, copper, brass, gold powder 70 x 26 x 27 cm

A lovely crisp autumn leaf, burnished red and gold, dotted with tiny pockets and small age spots, describing its transience. This is one of the many lifelike metal sculptures of plants and leaves evocatively patinated in metal by Japanese artist Shota Suzuki. Born in 1987, he enrolled as a student of metalsmithing at Tohoku University of the Arts, where he mastered skills that enable him to model what he sees in the world. Drawing upon rich natural colours, Suzuki imagines plant life from brass alloy and other metals such as gold, silver, copper, and nickel.

Suzuki works exclusively in metal. He depicts the flowers and plants he sees around him during the long strolls he takes around the ancient capital of Kyoto. In his studio,

he combines traditional Japanese metalworking techniques with some modern processes. A cherry flower in bloom, an insect-eaten leaf, a dandelion whose seeds are blown away by the wind: all his intricate creations brilliantly use hard metals to evoke the delicateness of plants.

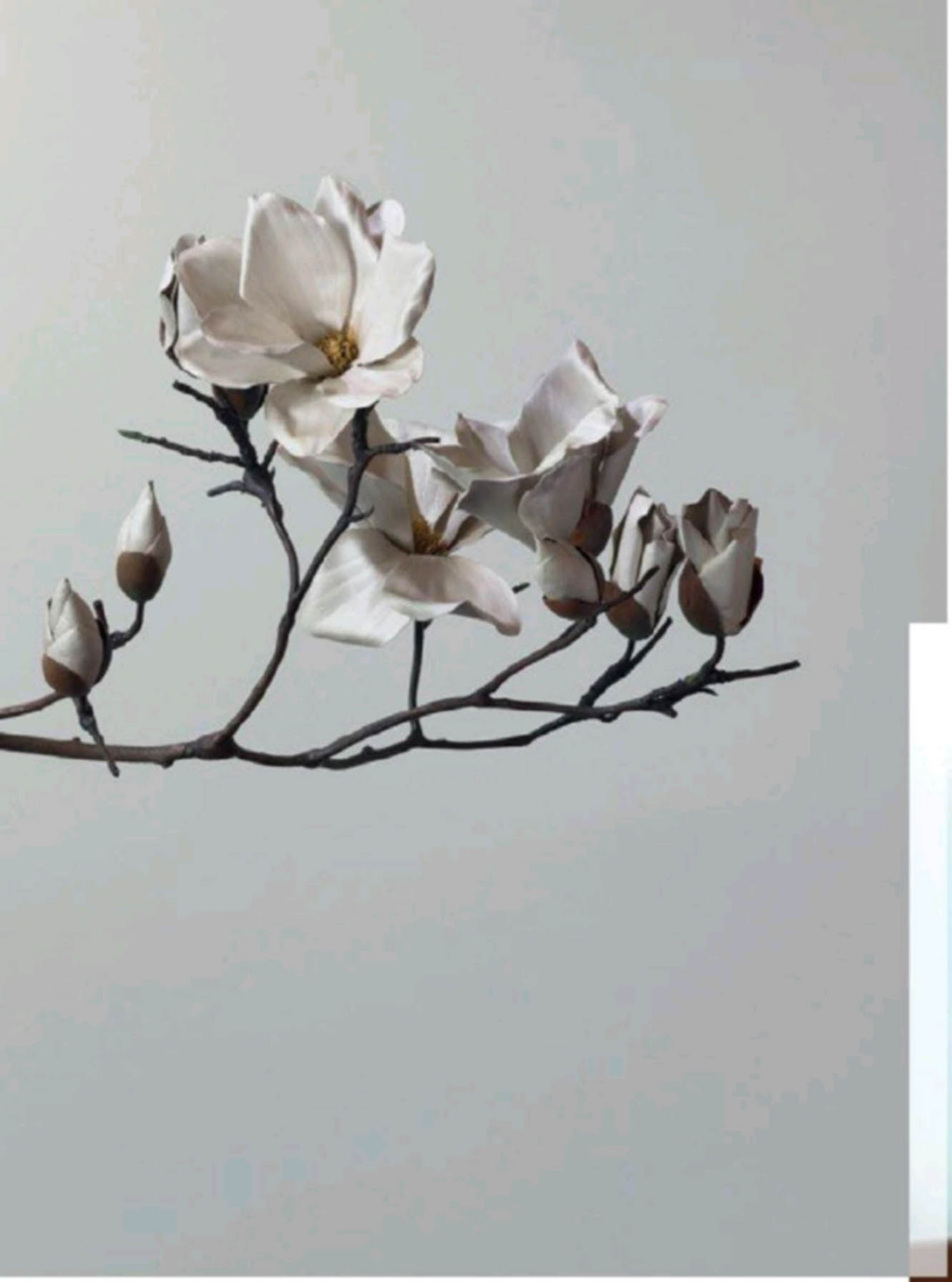
Here the Shiogama City-born artist answers some questions.

Where do you find your inspiration?
My inspiration comes from any landscapes that include plants. The motifs I encounter on my daily walks or travels serve as sources of inspiration. I am particularly attracted to wild plants, which are abundant but often overlooked, such as dandelions. Close and thoughtful observation reveals incredible beauty. I pay attention to the small oxalis that sometimes grow out of the stone walls surrounding Kyoto's temples. The way their stem stretches toward the light, from deep within the stones, is both charming and a testament to their strong vitality.

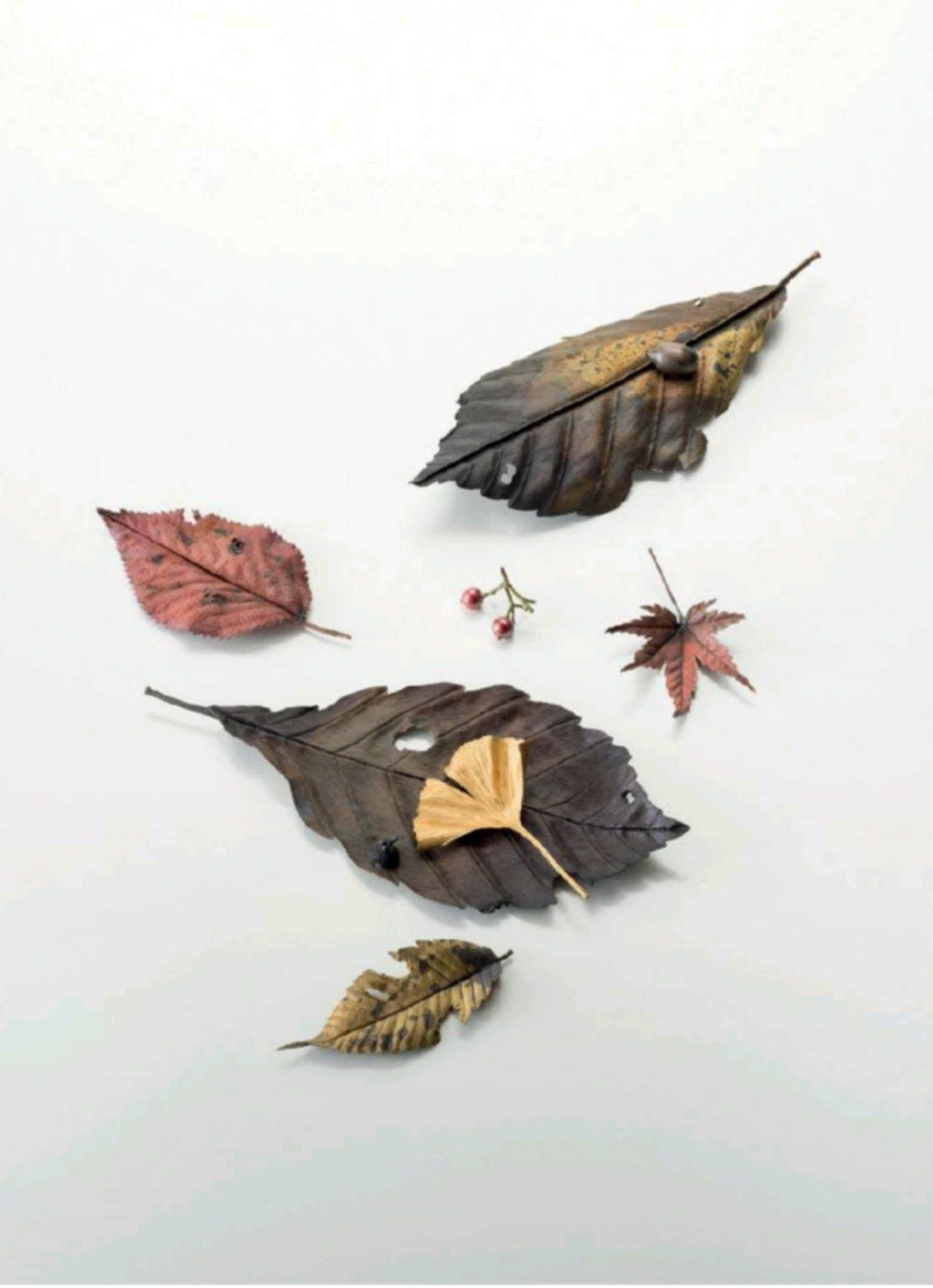
You are not just representing plants, you are aiming to capture a particular moment in time, aren't you?
Yes, these plants constantly change appearance. They are shaped by external elements such as wind, rain, and sunlight, transforming into new, captivating compositions with every passing moment. I intend to capture these fleeting moments of natural beauty, bringing them to life through my creations.

Your pieces feature beguiling colours. How do you achieve this?
My work expresses colour solely through metal. Each metal has its own unique colour, so I use different metals to create a variety of hues. Copper gives shades of black, brown, red, and green, brass offers yellow, orange, and brown, silver provides white, grey, and pale purple, and gold yields yellow. I use chemical reactions such as oxidation, sulphuration, and rusting to bring out these colours. In addition to colour, I also consider the hardness, brittleness, and elasticity of each metal when choosing which one to use.

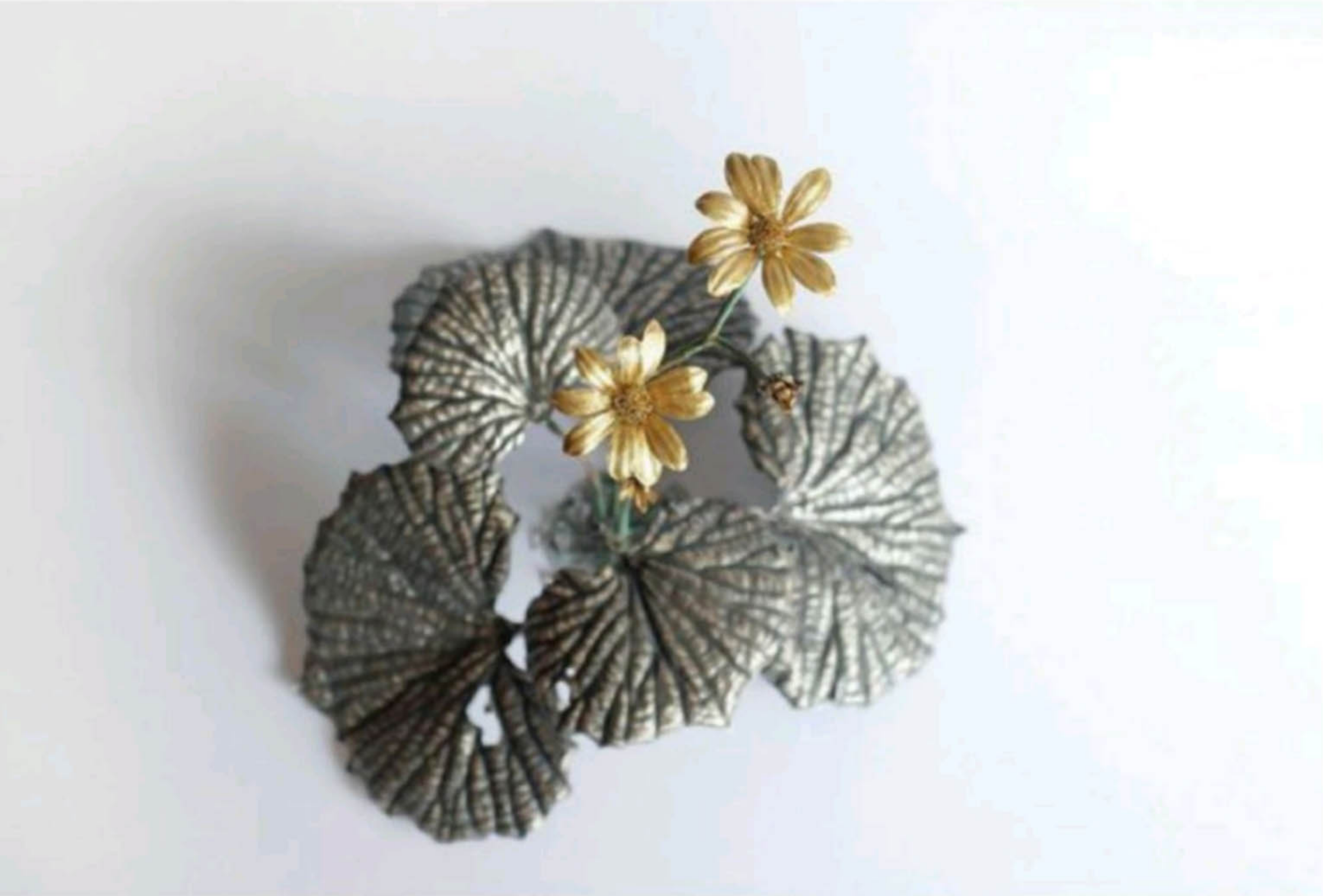
"My inspiration comes from any landscapes that include plants. The motifs I encounter on my daily walks or travels serve as sources of inspiration. I am particularly attracted to wild plants, which are abundant but often overlooked, such as dandelions."
— Shota Suzuki.



Left: Shota Suzuki , The Magnolia Branch (wall hanging) Silver, copper, brass, gold powder 70 x 26 x 27 cm. Right: Shota Suzuki at work in his studio.



Top: Shota Suzuki, The Autumn Treasure Box Cherry leaf: copper; maple leaf: brass, copper; oak leaf: brass; zelvoka leaf: brass; acorn: copper, silver; nadina berries: copper, nickel silver; gingko leaf: brass, gold power 20.5 x 8 x H 3.5 cm. Right: Shota Suzuki at work in his studio. Bottom: Shota Suzuki, The Japanese Silver Leaf Gold, silver, copper, nickel silver, gold powder, patina 30 x 26 x H 33 cm



You use a variety of techniques. Within your practice, is it possible to say what proportion derives from traditional Japanese techniques, and what proportion is more contemporary?
Modern elements in my work come from the use of contemporary tools and machines, such as rollers to create metal sheets, burners for fire, rotors for metal grinding, and sandblasting using a compressor. Metal shears have also become more convenient and easier to use than traditional ones. However, the techniques themselves have remained unchanged since the Edo and Meiji periods.

Could you describe one of those techniques?
The purple petals of the Oxalis were created using a traditional Kyoto colouring technique. This method transforms silver into a hue that lies between purple and grey. It is said to have originated a long time ago when a craftsman, commissioned by a tea master, developed the technique to fulfil a request for a colour that was “neither black nor white”. The colouring is achieved by immersing silver in a solution of salt, vinegar, and copper sulphate.

Can you describe your Autumn Treasure Box series?
I have always enjoyed walking while observing fallen leaves. This is because their diverse shapes, colours, and sizes overlap to create endlessly unique and beautiful compositions. This series highlights fallen leaves and seeds carried by the wind and gathered in corners during the autumn and winter. Lifting a large leaf reveals smaller hidden leaves inside, evoking the charm of a treasure box.

Which would you say is the most critical phase of your work?
The most important and difficult phase of my work is brazing. The task of joining over 100 parts into a single piece is extremely challenging.

> *“My aim in creating works of art is not only to satisfy my own desire to make things with my hands but also to help others recognise the beautiful landscapes that exist all around us and are often overlooked. I wish to share the beauty and the mystery of the lifecycle.”*
> *— Shota Suzuki.*

I know that you do not make preparatory drawings, which I find astounding. So how do you approach the composition?
While making the parts, I think about the overall composition. The detailed composition is decided at the brazing stage. For this reason, I make more parts than I need, and many of them end up not being used.

Why do you create?
My aim in creating works of art is not only to satisfy my own desire to make things with my hands but also to help others recognise the beautiful landscapes that exist all around us and are often overlooked. I wish to share the beauty and the mystery of the lifecycle. ◇

Sophie Richard is the author of The Art Lover’s Guide to Japanese Museums. She has represented Shota Suzuki in Europe for the last three years. His work can be seen in London at Stuart Lochhead Sculpture and at the TEFAF art fair in Maastricht, March 14-19, 2026.

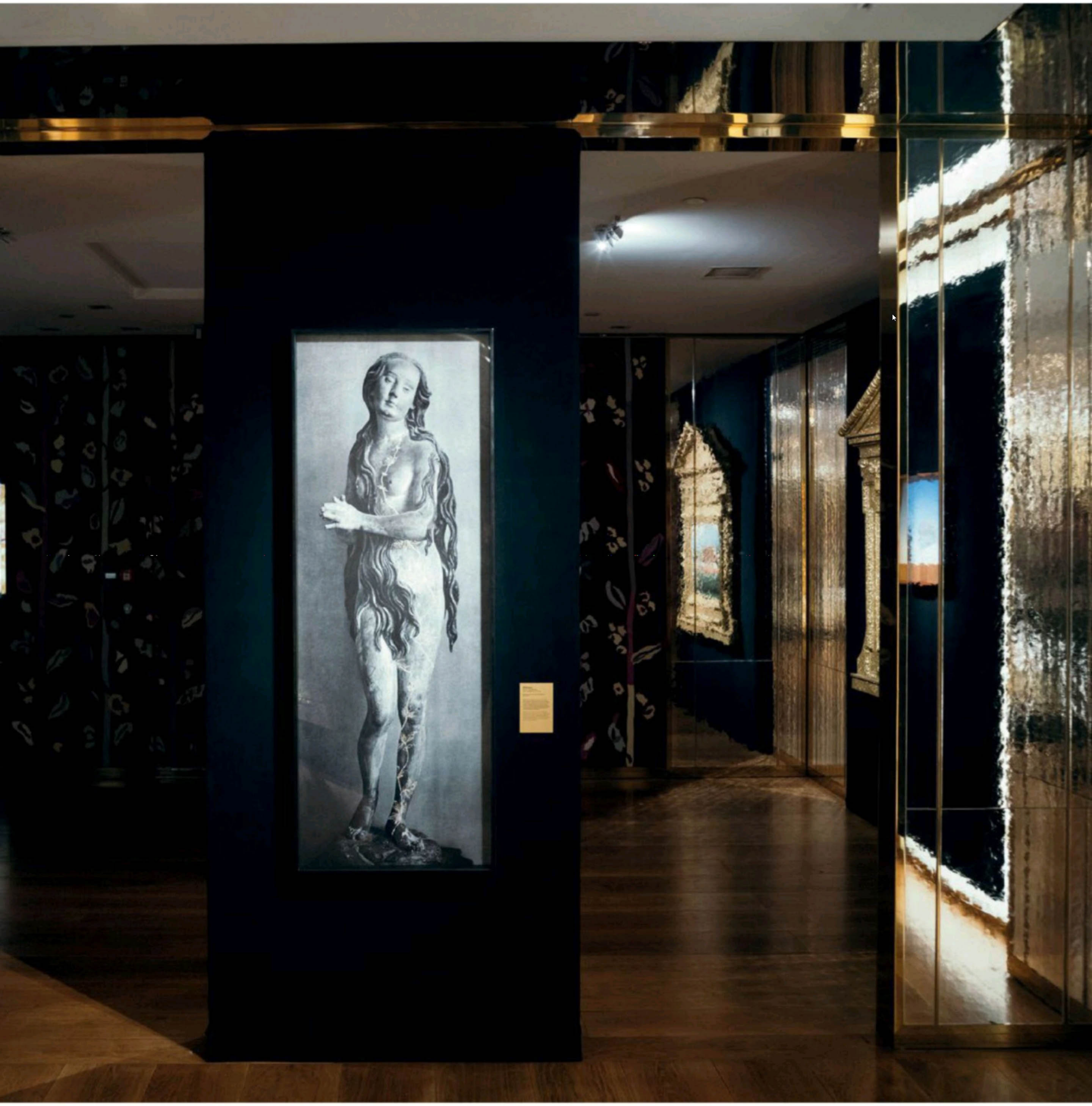
Moments in Love

Guerlain's intense relationship with art and artists has been part of its story since 1828.

by Clara Le Fort

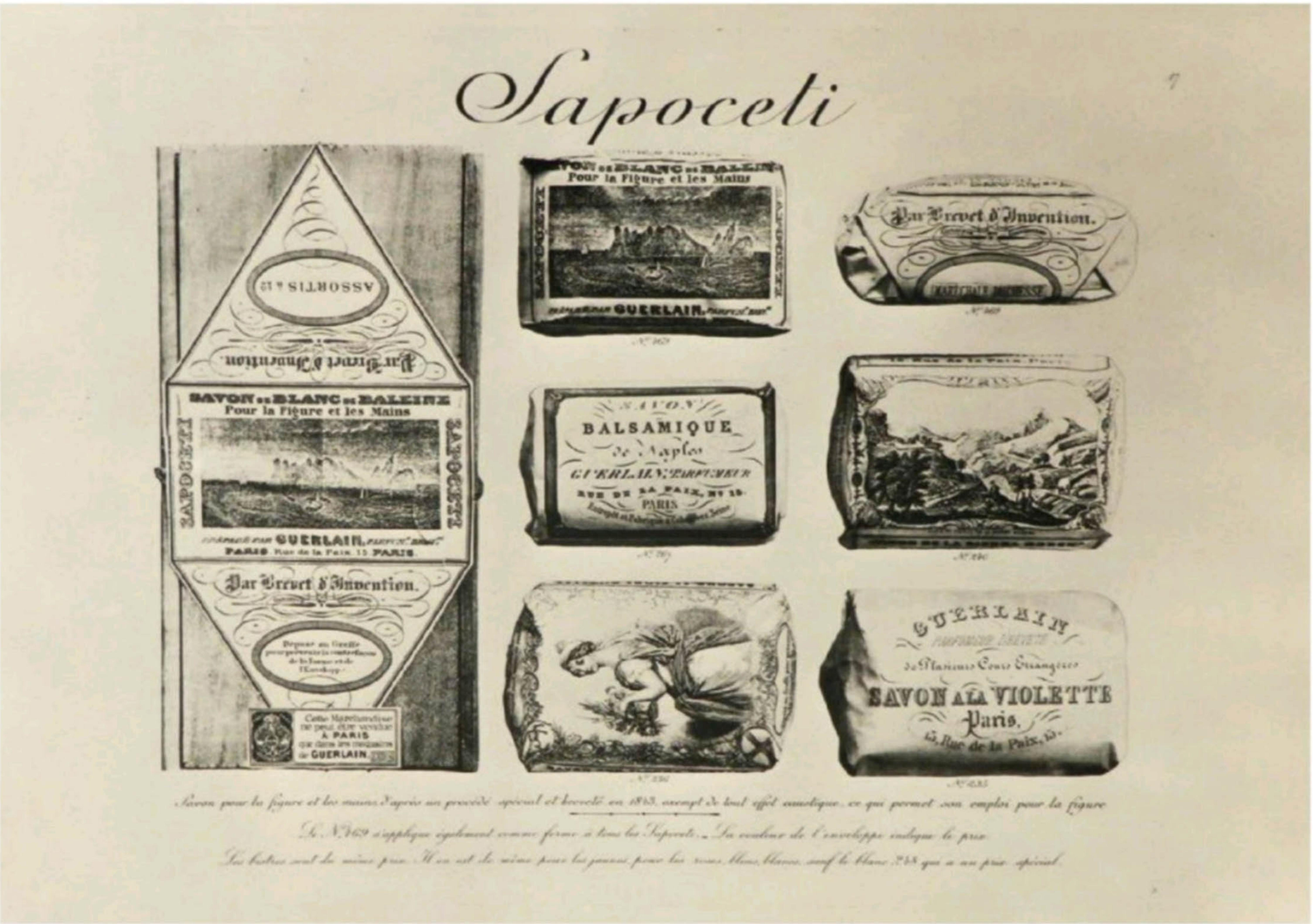
For generations, Guerlain perfumers have drawn inspiration from the avant-garde, and called upon artists to enrich creations and collections, collaborating with painters, illustrators, decorators, as well as sculptors, designers and photographers, to tell more than perfume and beauty stories.

A stroll through the maison's archives near Paris's Pont Neuf is mesmerising. A two-century-old minimally engraved cologne perfume bottle sits next to timeless illustrations first used to advertise lipstick. An intensely coloured Yves Klein perfume bottle contrasts with an intricately sculpted Baccarat-



Installation titled Marie L'Égyptienne Herbarium III (2024) by Polish artist Wiktoria Wojciechowska exhibited at Maison Guerlain © Guerlain.

GUERLAIN
PARIS



Sapoceti

Par Brevet d'Invention.
ASSORTIS
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Pour la Figure et les Mains
SAPOCETI
GUERLAIN
PARIS Rue de la Paix 15 PARIS
Cette Marchandise ne peut être vendue A PARIS que dans les magasins de GUERLAIN
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SAVON A LA VIOLETTE
Paris,
15, Rue de la Paix, 15.

Savon pour la figure et les mains d'après un procédé spécial et breveté en 1843, exempt de tout effet caustique, ce qui permet son emploi pour la figure

Le N. 169 s'applique également comme forme à tous les Sapoceti. La couleur de l'enveloppe indique le prix

Les boîtes sont du même prix. Il en est de même pour les jaunes, pour les roses, bleus, blancs, sauf le blanc 248 qui a un prix spécial.

"Since the end of the 19th century, the house has contributed to the growth of fashion photography with its advertising posters." — Ann-Caroline Prazan.

Left from top: Guerlain's historic boutique on Avenue des Champs Elysées. Below: Inside Guerlain's archives: scented soaps, cosmetics, red lipstick and eye shadow © Archives Guerlain. Above: Guerlain's perfume bottles have a long history with artists and creatives of their time. Their classic shapes have evolved into works of art. L'Heure Bleue (2022) inspired by Yves Klein's blue is an exceptional piece, so is Lee Ufan's Flacon Quadrilobé (2024) (c) Archives Guerlain.

crafted collectible and Korean artist Lee Ufan's contemporary take on painting a perfume bottle.

Set during Art Basel Paris, an annual exhibition showcases emerging or recognised artists from the international scene. This year, 'Straight to the heart — a century of pure love' celebrates one of Guerlain's greatest love affairs: the centenary of the fragrance Shalimar, created in 1925 by Jacques Guerlain.

'Straight to the heart' will take visitors on an inner journey that confronts us with our vision of love. More than that, it is about the way in which society has expanded its understanding of love over the past century. Emotion is exposed without filters — at times raw, often tender, always multifaceted — through the works of Marina Abramović, Liu Bolin, Eugène Carrière, David Hockney, Pablo Picasso, Pierre et Gilles and Aristide Maillol to name just a few.

We spoke with Ann-Caroline Prazan, director of art, culture and heritage at Guerlain.

Since the origins of Guerlain in 1828, how have artistic collaborations come about?
For Guerlain, luxury has a mission: to be a vector of culture and a quest for meaning. Thus, each artistic collaboration is an opportunity for a true exchange about the house. Guerlain creates and maintain strong ties with the visionaries of their time, without ever stamping the brand on any creation. From this great trust is born a reciprocal complicity that stands the test of time. The historic house on Avenue des Champs-Élysées is a testament to this.

What role does photography play in the maison's cultural heritage?
Since the end of the 19th century, the house has contributed to the growth of fashion photography with its advertising posters. But it was not until the second half of the 20th century that advertising photography truly came into its own. Guerlain then initiated numerous collaborations with renowned photographers such as Roger Schall, Robert Doisneau, Willy Ronis, Édouard Boubat, John Stewart, Paolo Roversi and Patrick Demarchelier. Since 2013, the house has deliberately opened this group of predominantly male photographers to women by organising exhibitions and incorporating their works into the Guerlain collections.

How has Guerlain deployed artistic and cultural programming?
For 20 years, Guerlain has been inseparable from its cultural programming. In partnership with the FIAC and then Art Basel Paris, it offers authentic and rare legitimacy. In doing so, Guerlain multiplies artistic expressions through a major annual exhibition, constantly reinventing itself in an ultra-contemporary manner while remaining faithful to its history. 'Lily of the Valley', for example, presents itself as a hybrid bottle that, thanks to extensive archival work, encapsulates all the creations around the Lily of the Valley bottle for over 20 years.

How do you combine heritage with modernity?
We must use the tools of our time, reinterpret the codes of the past, and remain curious about everything. I travel the world to visit artists' workshops from Korea to India, from China to Africa via Brazil. There have never been any borders at Guerlain, and cultural programming continues to echo these encounters and discoveries. To address the subject of ecological transition, Guerlain surrounds itself with visionaries such as the filmmaker Yann Arthus-Bertrand, who defends the preservation of the living world and alerts us to the need to protect natural ecosystems. Guerlain accompanies him on the filming of his films, all over the planet.

How does the partnership with Lee Ufan Arles play a role?
The Lee Ufan Arles x Guerlain art and environment prize takes up a key subject for Guerlain: the preservation of nature, of which the bee has been the ultimate symbol for more than 170 years. The bee bottle was created in 1853. In the same spirit, the prize receives applications from all over the world related to the environment. It rewards, each year, a project that places at the heart of its concerns the relationships between artistic creation and the environment. For example, the winner of the 2025 edition, artist Caroline Corbasson, sees the wind as the greatest pollinator. ◇

'Straight to the heart — a century of pure love' is on show from October 22 to November 16 2025.

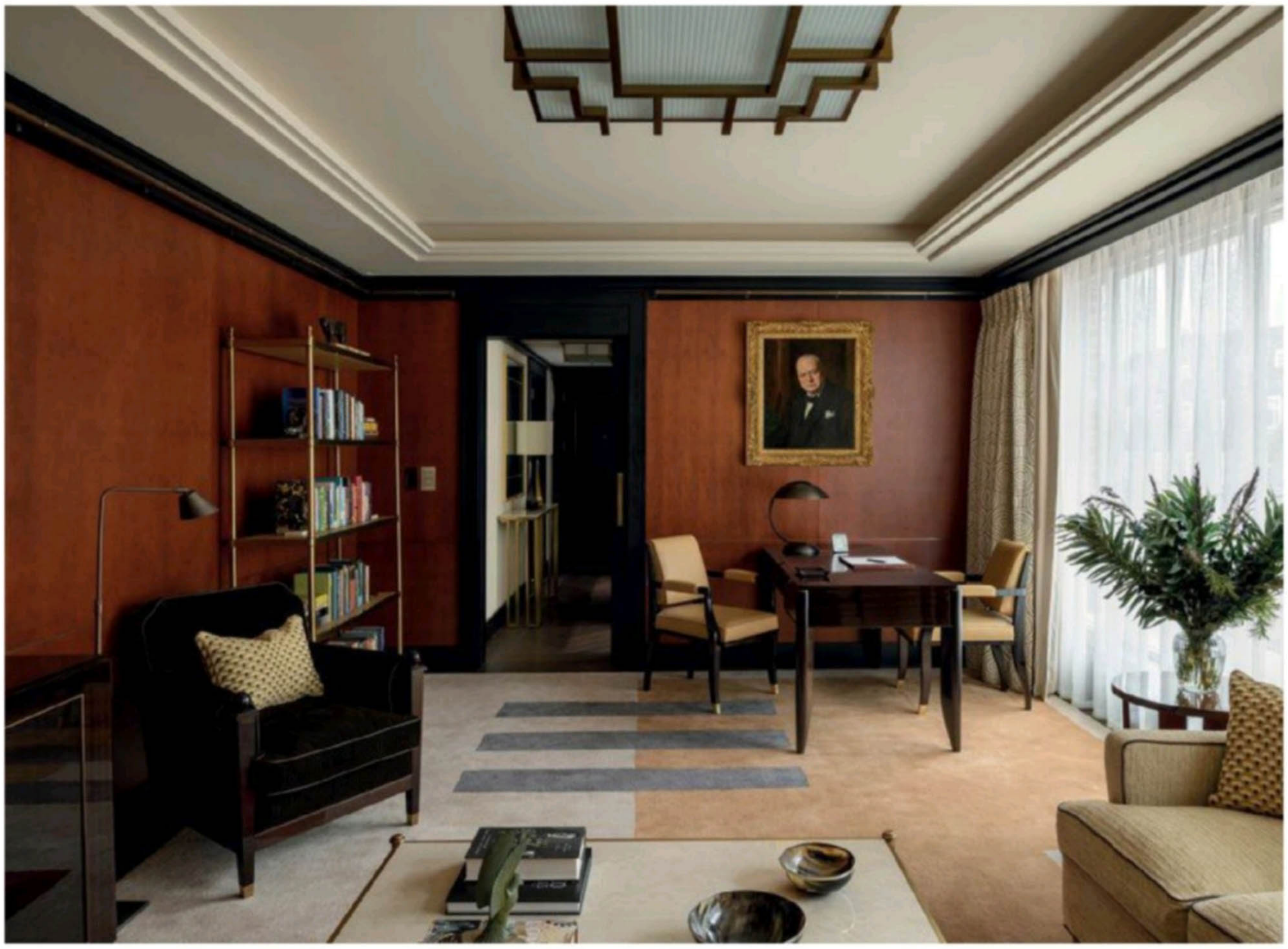
www.guerlain.com

> *"For Guerlain, luxury has a mission: to be a vector of culture and a quest for meaning. Thus, each artistic collaboration is an opportunity for a true exchange about the house." — Ann-Caroline Prazan.*

This years' Lee Ufan Arles x Guerlain art and environment prize celebrates the talent of young artist Caroline Corbasson (above). During her residence at the Lee Ufan Arles – founded by Korean artist Lee Ufan, at work, painting (below) – she explored the power of the wind in an exhibition titled "Something Moves" ©Andrea Montano/ David Giancatarina.

AUTHENTIC LUXURY

“Time and silence are the most
luxurious things today.”
— Tom Ford



Golden-Era Glamour

A century on from the birth of the Art Deco era, a look at the hotels embodying 'The Jazz Age'.

by Daniel Nash

Art deco details at the Beaumont Hotel, Mayfair.

In October 1925 in Paris, the Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes was attended by 16 million visitors. It highlighted the new form of architecture and design that became known thereafter as Art Deco.

With Art Deco marking its centennial this year, there's no better time to revive the joie de vivre of the time with a stay at the most dazzling hotels that embody the era's signature glamour, elegance, and opulence.

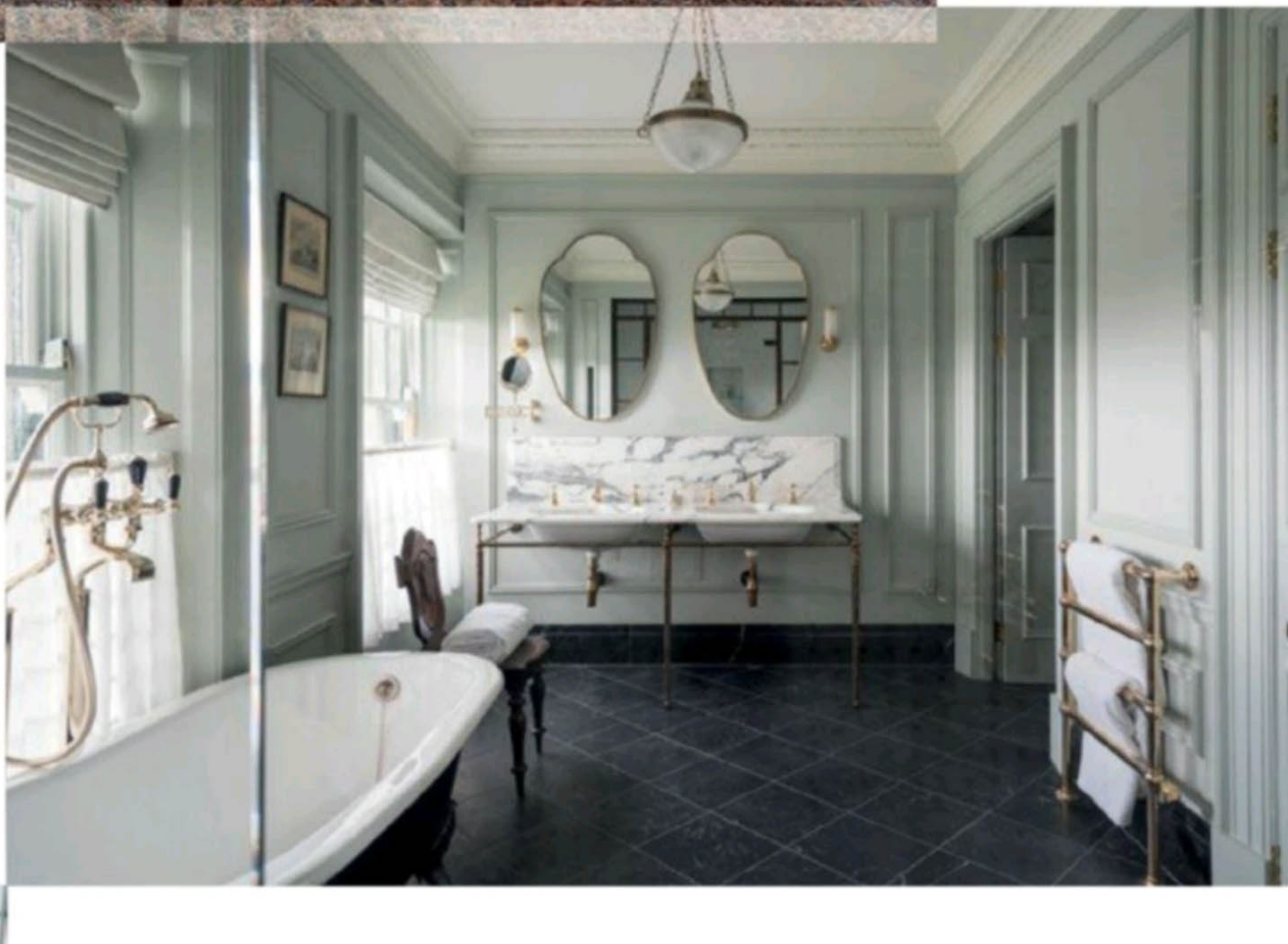
From gilded lobbies to geometric grandeur, these storied stays are a testament to a century of bold design and timeless luxury.

From the legendary Hotel du Cap-Eden-Roc — the glamorous French Riviera palace that inspired Tender Is the Night — to Le Bristol Paris, also celebrating its 100th birthday, we look at seven spectacular properties with rich histories and enduring allure, where the bold designs and spirit of adventure that embodied the Roaring Twenties continue to delight the modern traveller.

The Beaumont Mayfair, UK

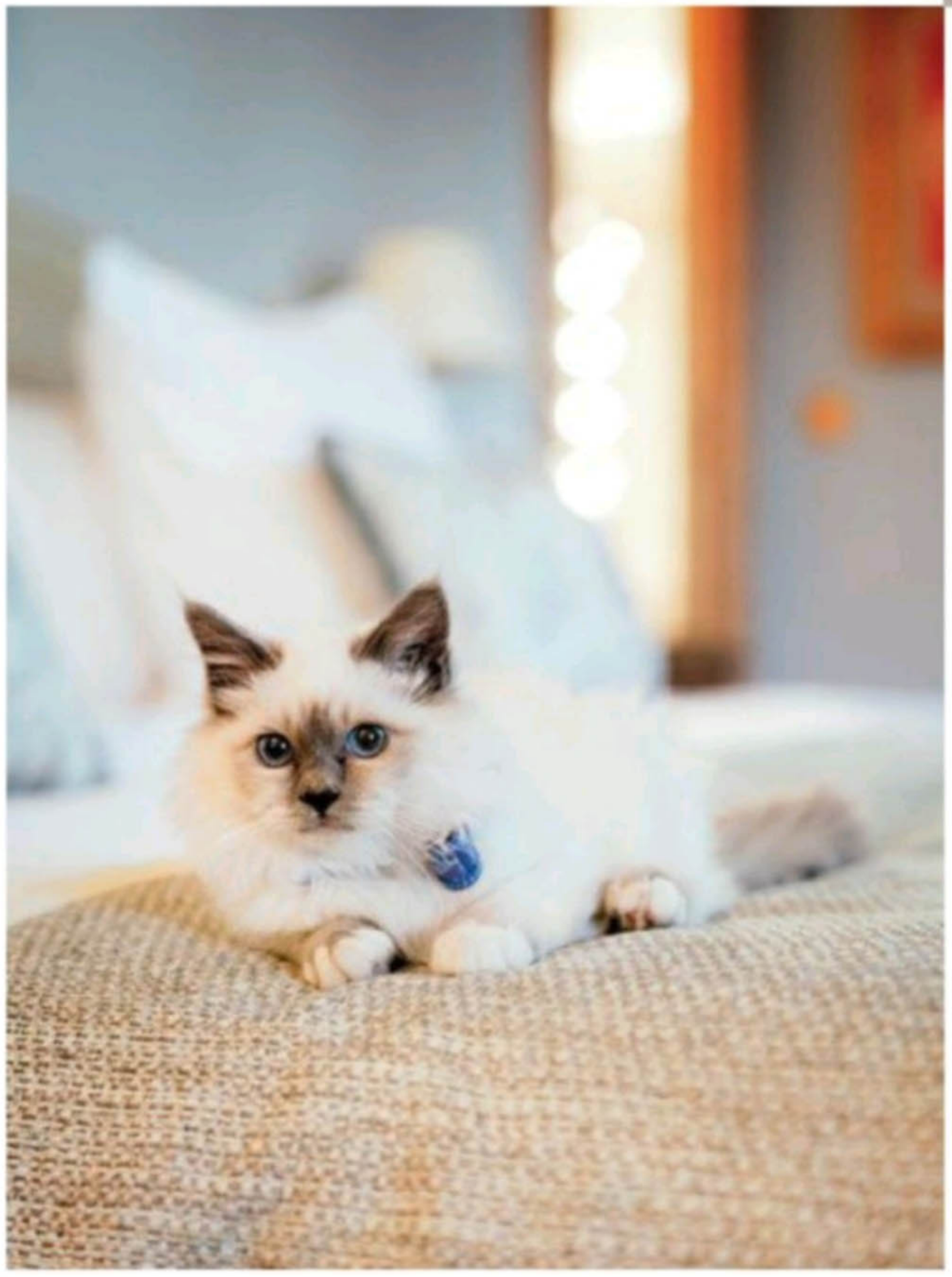
Built between 1925 and 1926, The Beaumont Mayfair puts the roar in Roaring Twenties, having started life as the British capital's chicest parking garage. Today, the Grade II-listed hotel's interiors pay homage to the building's Art Deco roots, with the late Thierry Despont's vision brought to life through bespoke furnishings, geometric symmetry, and a rich palette of woods and gleaming metals, capturing the era's signature glamour. Beyond its design, the hotel immerses guests in Jazz Age elegance, from its world-class art collection to the intimate Gatsby Bar.

Gleneagles, Scotland
Set amid Perthshire's rolling Ochil Hills, The Gleneagles Hotel has been the retreat of choice for discerning travellers since 1924, earning its reputation as the 'eighth wonder of the world'. The estate's carefully restored interiors give a taste of Jazz Age glamour, from the intimate American Bar — where cashmere-panelled walls and vintage mirrored panels evoke the allure of a Gatsby-era salon — to The Century Bar's sleek geometric design, polished finishes, and unrivalled whisky collection.



From top: Royal Lochnagar Suite. Royal Lochnagar Suite Bathroom. Lobby Fire.

From top: Le Bristol Paris, Façade, French Garden Side, Romain Réglade. Epicure Restaurant. Socrate, Le Bristol's resident feline.



Le Bristol Paris, France

As Le Bristol Paris also marks its 100th anniversary in 2025, the hotel remains a beacon of Art Deco elegance, having first opened at the height of the Roaring Twenties. From its grand entrance with soaring ceilings and opulent chandeliers to its rooftop pool designed to evoke the deck of a 1920s yacht, the hotel embodies the movement's signature glamour and craftsmanship. In celebration of its centenary, the newly redesigned Imperial Suite pays tribute to Art Deco's refined aesthetic, featuring bold geometric motifs, lacquered wood panelling, and custom-made artworks by George Condo.

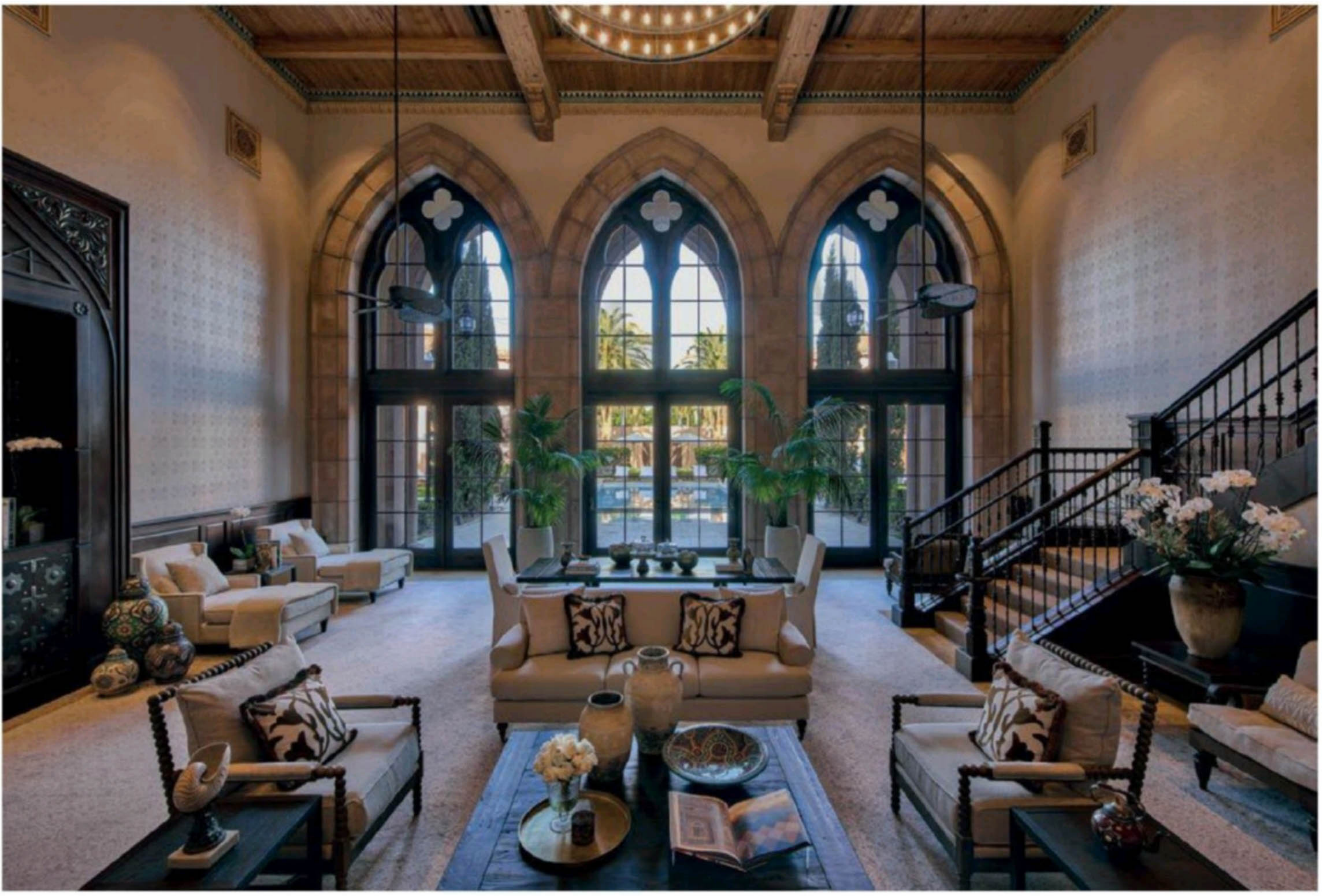
From top: A suite at Hotel du Cap-Eden-Roc.
Below: The Dior Spa.

Hotel du Cap-Eden-Roc, France
Perched on the southernmost tip of Cap d'Antibes, Hotel du Cap-Eden-Roc has hosted the world's most distinguished artists, writers, and luminaries. F Scott Fitzgerald found inspiration here for his famous novel Tender Is the Night, forever linking the hotel to the golden age of Riviera glamour. Guests looking to revel in Art Deco elegance can enjoy the two seaside restaurants, Louroc and The Grill, or take up residence in one of the legendary poolside cabanas, a signature of the hotel's offering since 1929. Today, this legendary Oetker Collection property continues to embody Côte d'Azur's timeless mystique, where history, literature, and elegance converge in perfect harmony.

The Boca Raton, Florida, USA

As The Boca Raton approaches its centennial in 2026, South Florida's most storied resort remains a monument to 1920s flair and art deco glamour. Designed by visionary architect Addison Mizner, it has long defined Palm Beach luxury. At its heart is Cloister, where it all began. Opened in 1926 as the Ritz-Carlton Cloister Inn, the 294-room hotel quickly became a sought-after retreat, known for its grand architecture and secluded gardens. One of five hotels within the resort's private gated club, Cloister sits Harborside, moments from the Golf Club, Racquet Club, and Spa Palmera. Honouring its rich past, it offers world-class dining, amenities, and retail experiences. Through a century of change, it has remained a place of style, where past and present meet. Now, The Boca Raton invites guests to celebrate 100 years of timeless luxury.

From top: The Boca Raton Exterior.
Below: The Spa Great Room.



The Lowell Hotel, New York

As New York celebrates a century of Art Deco design, The Lowell stands as a refined tribute to the era's timeless elegance. Opened in 1927, the hotel seamlessly blends classic sophistication with subtle Art Deco details — from its symmetrical façade to the geometric motifs in Jacques, the hotel's distinguished bar, and the intricate crown mouldings of The Club Room. Polished metals, marble finishes, and rich textiles reflect the period's signature materials, while its intimate, residential ambiance and rare wood-burning fireplaces evoke the exclusivity and craftsmanship of the 1920s.

From top: The Lowell Hotel lobby. Exterior terrace. Elegant china.

From top: Orient Express Corinthian Mirror Suite © Martin Darzacq for Maxime d'Angeac & Accor. Orient Express Corinthian Bathroom Details © Alixe Lay.

The Corinthian Yacht, Orient Express
Legendary luxury passenger train Orient Express is now delving into the world of classic yachting. Set for her maiden voyage in June 2026, Orient Express Corinthian will "draw inspiration from the golden age of luxury cruises", according to Sébastien Bazin, Accor Group chairman and chief executive, the hotel group that now owns Orient Express.

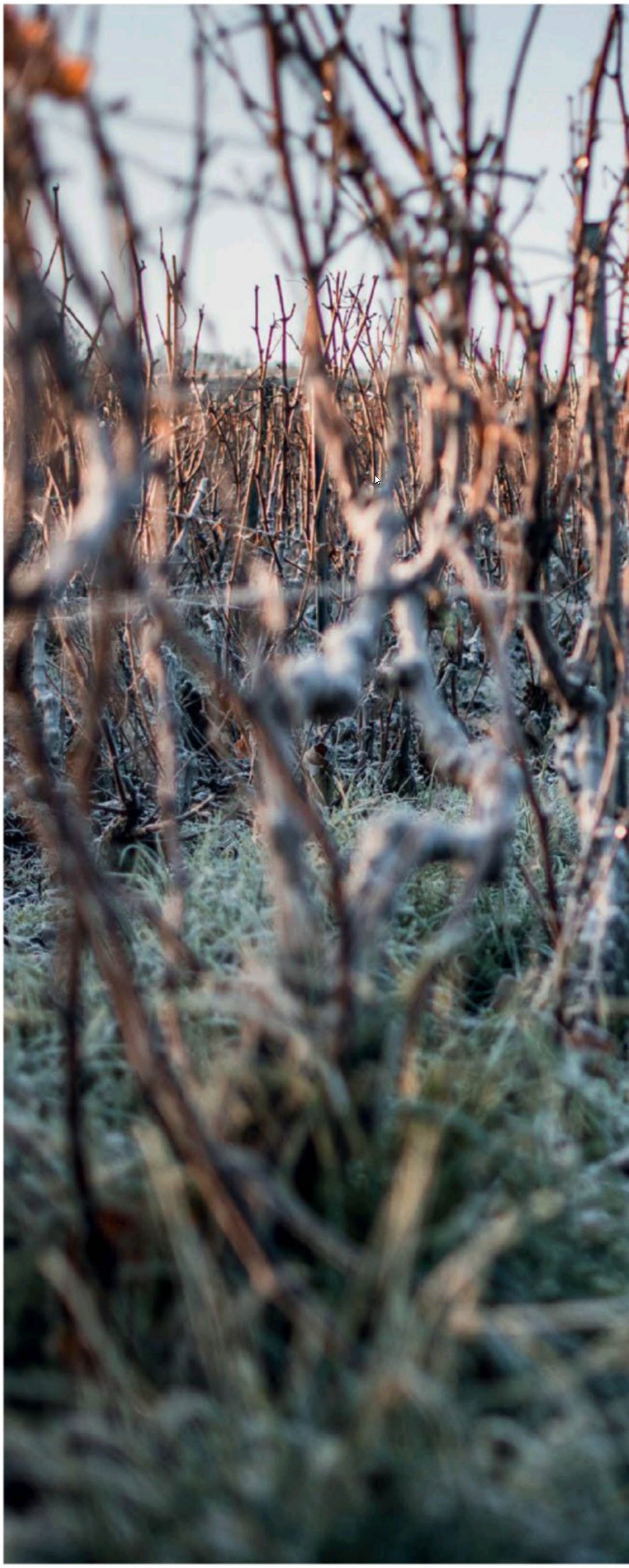
Designed by Chantiers de l'Atlantique, Orient Express Corinthian will be the world's largest sailing yacht. Spanning an impressive 220m and sporting 4,500 square metres of sails mounted on three inclinable masts, the ship will be able to reach a speed of 17 knots propelled solely by the wind, set to cruise the Mediterranean, Adriatic and Caribbean seas.

There will be 54 suites measuring up to 230 square metres, each one comprising a luxurious bubble with panoramic bay windows. Evocative of the timeless glamour of the era, France's top gold and silversmiths were called upon to embellish the interiors, while wood, leather and marble fixtures were created by skilled craftsmen. There are eight bars, including a 1930s-style speakeasy and a 115-seat cabaret exuding a Parisian atmosphere with Art Deco overtones. ◇

Effervescent Energy

Toasting a decade since Champagne was awarded Unesco World Heritage status.

by Lisa Young



Coco Chanel famously said: “I only drink Champagne on two occasions: when I’m in love and when I’m not.”

It is rumoured that local Champenois anoint the lips of their newborn babies with a Champagne baptism, although today most parents prefer a healthier approach, and buy a bottle to keep to celebrate their child’s 18th birthday.

On July 4, 2015, France’s Champagne region was officially inscribed as a Unesco World Heritage Site, recognised for its extraordinary cultural landscape shaped by centuries of winemaking tradition. It was a defining moment of pride for locals.

Early-morning frost in Chigny-les-Roses, a vineyard village in the heart of the Montagne de Reims.

19
AVENUE DE CHAMPAGNE
ampagne
ERLIN

Top Left: Avenue de Champagne in Épernay, France (c) Lisa Young. Right: Pouring a glass. Bottom left: Pommery Champagne (c) Lisa Young.

The Champagne region, located east of Paris, is the only place in the world where Champagne can be 'officially' made, and it is under strict protection of the Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée.

A decade later, over 5,000 people gathered on the hills of Champillon in Marne to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Champagne's houses, hillsides and cellars being listed as Unesco World Heritage. The region raised a glass to the anniversary of the inscription with celebrations stretching far beyond a single day.

Pierre Cheval, who died in 2016, was among those who played a crucial role in the Champagne region's bid for inclusion on Unesco's World Heritage List, a project close to his heart. A man of many talents, he was the first deputy mayor of Aÿ and an active member of the board of directors of the Syndicat Général des Vignerons de la Champagne.

It's a deserving recognition. The Champagne region, located east of Paris, is the only place in the world where Champagne can be 'officially' made, and it is under strict protection of the Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée. The region is divided between four districts: Vallée de la Marne, Côte de Bar (Aube), Côte des Blancs and Montagne de Reims.

The main town centres in the region are Épernay and Reims. Reims Cathedral, a stunning structure steeped in history, is the site where the Nazis officially surrendered, thus ending the Second World War.
Inside the cathedral you'll find stained-glass windows depicting scenes of Champagne production. The windows were commissioned by the Champagne industry, created by artist Jacques Simon and completed in 1953, as part of post-war restorations.

The primary grape varieties grown in the region are Pinot Meunier, Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. These three form the foundation of most Champagne blends. Pinot Noir is the most common in Aube and grows especially well in the Montagne de Reims. Pinot Meunier is the main grape in the Vallée de la Marne, while the Côte des Blancs is mostly planted with Chardonnay.

Throughout 2025, a calendar of exclusive tours, curated exhibitions and special events is bringing together key figures from across the region, paying tribute to Champagne's 300-year legacy and its enduring global prestige.

Julien Martin is export manager at Champagne Besserat de Bellefon in Épernay. "We motivate people to conserve, preserve and speak about the Champagne region and how things have changed in the last 10 years. The cellars in Champagne represent a humanitarian story: it's not just about the landscape; we represent a European industrial story, a cultural landscape and the first exportation, and the meeting of a natural and man-made landscape.

"There are plenty of sparkling wines around, but there's something specific about Champagne. It's the land, the terroir, that makes the difference. It's the chalk underground that provides the minerals for the grape growing. People are looking for concentration and richness you may not find in other sparkling wines."

Champagne terroir characteristics include its northerly geographical position, its mostly limestone soil (with chalk, marl, hard limestone, sand and heavy clay), its topography (with steep and hilly slopes for optimal sunlight and drainage) and its continental climate (favourable sunshine in summer, risk of spring frosts, regular rainfall and steady temperatures).

"The cellars in Champagne represent a humanitarian story: it's not just about the landscape; we represent a European industrial story, a cultural landscape and the first exportation, and the meeting of a natural and man-made landscape." — Julien Martin.

Champagne has long held a distinguished place on the world stage, revered as the tipple of choice for moments of celebration and grandeur. From christening ships to marking Formula One victories, its effervescent presence signals something special. Champagne has become a cultural symbol of elegance and prestige, immortalised in classic Hollywood cinema and pop culture, including the timeless Casablanca, where it epitomised luxury and allure.

Yet, traditionally, Champagne is meant to be enjoyed anytime and anywhere, not just at lavish events but for everyday life… although perhaps not just as tennis world number one Jannik Sinner is about to serve in a Wimbledon final.

During the 2025 tournament, a cork popped from the stands and landed at Sinner's feet, prompting a firm word from the umpire: a very British mishap. The Champagne in question? Quite possibly Lanson, the official Champagne of Wimbledon since 1977.

According to Comité Champagne, to truly appreciate a chilled glass of Champagne, one should drink from a tall glass that widens in the middle and narrows at the top (a tulip-shaped glass), allowing the wine to express its aromas and develop the bubbles.

Victoria Henson is director of the Champagne Bureau UK, an organisation appointed by Comité Champagne, the trade association representing Champagne growers and houses.

"The beauty of Champagne is that there are many different styles to be enjoyed, with Rosé and Brut being the most popular — and Brut representing 80 per cent of Champagne shipments. It's a drink of quality with different aromas and can be paired with any type of meal. A glass of Champagne after a productive day is well-deserved. It's a pleasure to drink and shouldn't be restricted to special occasions."

As Pierre Cheval said on July 4, 2015 in Bonn, when the Unesco title was granted: "Long live the Champagne that sparkles in our glasses. Long live the Champagne area that sparkles in our hearts." ◇

CHAMPAGNE
Christian
Muller
GRAND CRU
CHAMPAGNE Christian Muller

Left: Outside Champagne Besserat de Bellefon in Épernay (c) Lisa Young. Right: Champagne Christian Muller ©Lisa Young 2025

Flavour at Full Volume

Le Doyenné exemplifies a philosophy of 'from wheelbarrow to plate'.

by Clara Le Fort

Top: Chef and owners Shaun Barney Kelly and James Henry. Right: The art of seasonal simplicity drives Le Doyenné's cooking philosophy © Evan Sung

An hour's drive from Paris is the small village of Saint-Vrain. Amid the narrow streets, nothing indicates that a rural gem, Le Doyenné, awaits. Enter the historical grounds of the Château de Saint-Vrain, once the property of Madame du Barry and Mortemart aristocratic dynasties, and, in the distance, sits Le Doyenné.

The brainchild of chefs and owners James Henry and Shaun Barney Kelly, there is a natural grandness to the restaurant-meets-guesthouse-meets-farm.

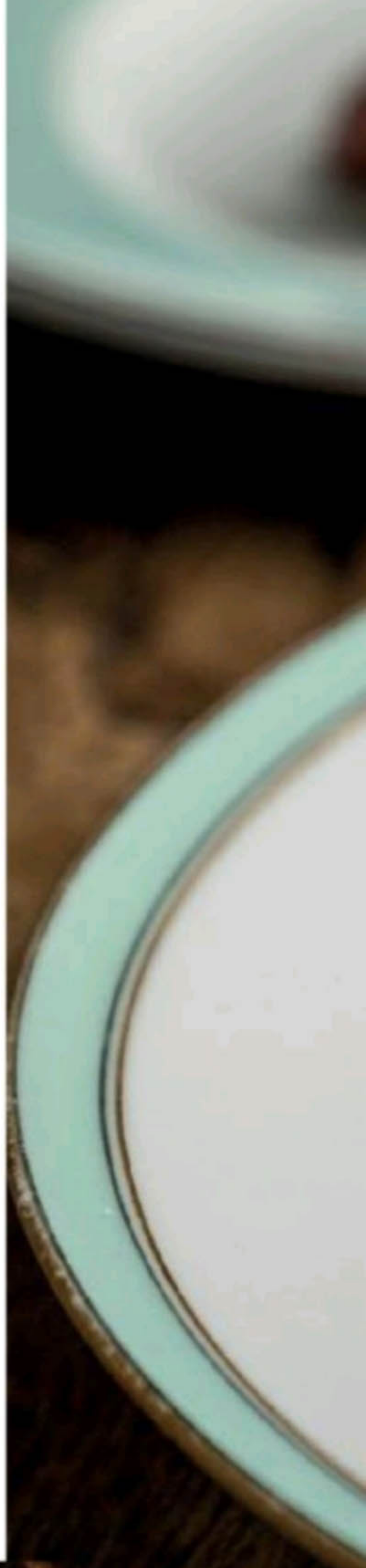
The century-old barn (Le Doyenné is the Mortemart family's name for it) has been stylishly restored to welcome a new generation of epicureans, who favour rubber boots over branded attires, scout Japanese handcrafted pruning shears and low-tech tools, crave heirloom vegetables and collect beautifully designed natural wine labels.

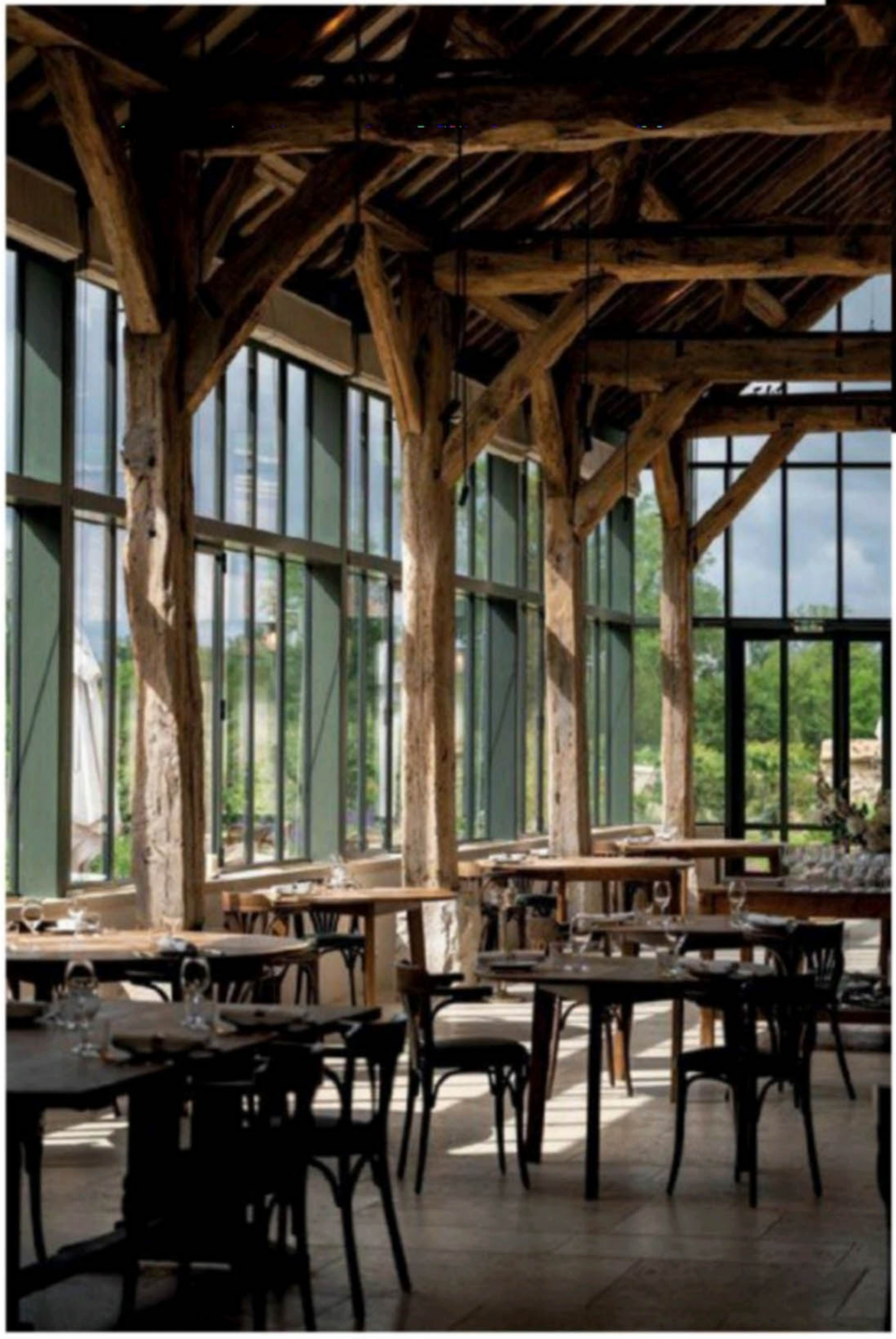
Stylish ambassadors of a long-gone era, Henry and Kelly have transformed the listed old barn and the estate's former stables (where Franco-US sculptor Niki de Saint Phalle and Swiss sculptor Jean Tinguely created their monumental works in the 1970s) into a vast light-filled restaurant with 11 guest rooms.

On all floors and in every corner, timelessness prevails. A collection of old ceramics, vintage pots and jars turned into one-of-a-kind vases, matte silverware and rough linen towels, dried garlic flowers and richly patinated wooden surfaces, finely engraved water jugs with duck-shaped pouring spouts, and mismatched plates compose a perfectly unique décor. Countless layers all breathe historical heritage, whispering rather than shouting.

Outside, the centuries-old soil has been regenerated, now rich with produce that tastes like someone turned the volume up on flavour. "We began our journey in 2017. Inspired by the market gardens of France as well as the regenerative agricultural movement, we set out to fulfil our vision of growing for Le Doyenné. We planted the orchard and the walled garden. The estate's kitchen garden had lain dormant for the last 60 years. We chose to eschew the modern practice of tilling in favour of gentle decomposition through the use of compost and mulch, capturing carbon and preserving the microbial life that had been nurtured for hundreds of years," say Henry and Kelly.

As one ventures along alleys of lavender bushes, Le Doyenné's expansive modern-day pantry is both visual poetry and culinary powerhouse. A line-up of lush red tomatoes seems to play with bright-yellow zucchini flowers. Further down, trees of pear and apple contrast





Inside Le Doyenné, a listed old barn and former stables. © Evan Sung

Stylish ambassadors of a long-gone era, Henry and Kelly have transformed the listed old barn and the estate's former stables into a vast light-filled restaurant with 11 guest rooms.

with fields of rampant gherkin plants and green-bean shoots. "To date, hundreds of fruit trees and shrubs have been planted, as well as dozens of varieties of heirloom vegetables and herbs," add Henry and Kelly.

The picture-perfect Arcadian set-up is visible from the dining room, where floor-to-ceiling windows frame views of heirloom greens and young fruit trees. 'Wheelbarrow to plate', a display of miniature crudités, vibrant like an impressionist painting, complement brioche, paper-thin slices of farm-cured charcuterie and a bite-size shrimp crudo served on a nest of fermented raw potato strings.

"We hope one day to be a model for others to choose a better agricultural practice, which we believe is paramount for our society and planet's future."
— James Henry and Shaun Barney Kelly.

Le Doyenné sits in the heart of a vegetable garden where chefs and owners James Henry (above) and Shaun Barney Kelly harvest fresh produce daily. © Evan Sung

Next, the smoothest ajo blanco sprinkled with ripe grapes and garlic flowers perfectly counterbalances the mouth-watering freshness of open shiso leaf topped with apricot, cucumber and fresh almonds spiced with a homemade green oil. The next interlude is a beauty composed of a fennel slaw before the main unfolds as a brilliant take on zucchini flowers: stuffed with girolles, it is pan-fried and served with a poêlée of mushrooms, green and butter beans, red basil leaves, redcurrants, and a mushroom jus.

Even the seared duck filet comes enriched with a fennel gratin covered with buttery breadcrumbs and hazelnuts, doubled with a gem of iceberg lettuce; simply cut in two, it is seasoned with a bouquet of fresh herbs and vinaigrette. Around the room, a ballet of international talents further enhances tastes and attention to service: “The baker is from San Francisco, the bartender is Japanese… and there are 10 nationalities in our kitchens,” says Kelly. In just a few seasons, Le Doyenné has become popular with young chefs from around the world.

On the menu, Le Doyenné also “favours wines produced in vineyards that share our agricultural ideals, eschewing herbicides and pesticides and making living wines with minimal intervention”, says sommelier Romain Rieu. This is echoed by the rich and diverse wine list, which focuses on small estates, talented winemakers, either young and upcoming or more established and respected. Served at the table that night, was a beautifully balanced and refreshing Coteaux-Bourguignons 45/55 from Renaud Boyer in Meursault; a few Clair Obscur natural bubbles from Salima and Alain Cordeuil; a vibrant Chenin from the Mosse brothers; and a delicate pinot noir Côte de Night from Vin Noé in Saint-Aubin. The dinner ended with Les Barrieux produced by Jean-Yves Péron with a true respect for its terroir.

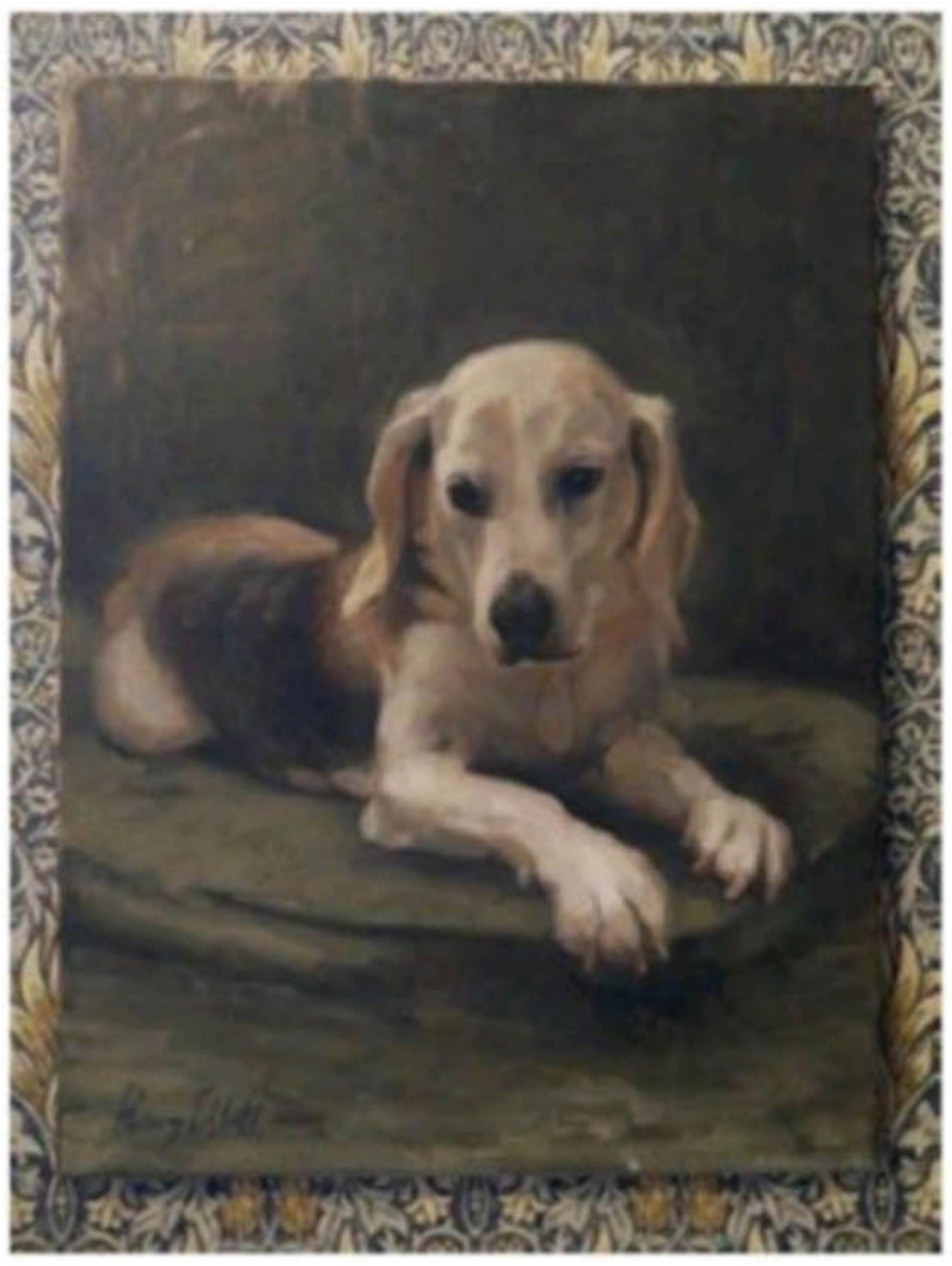
“In choosing to pursue regenerative agriculture, our mission is to sequester carbon, grow nutritious and flavourful vegetables and leave our environment in a healthier state than we found it. We hope one day to be a model for others to choose a better agricultural practice, which we believe is paramount for our society and planet’s future,” say Henry and Kelly. ◇

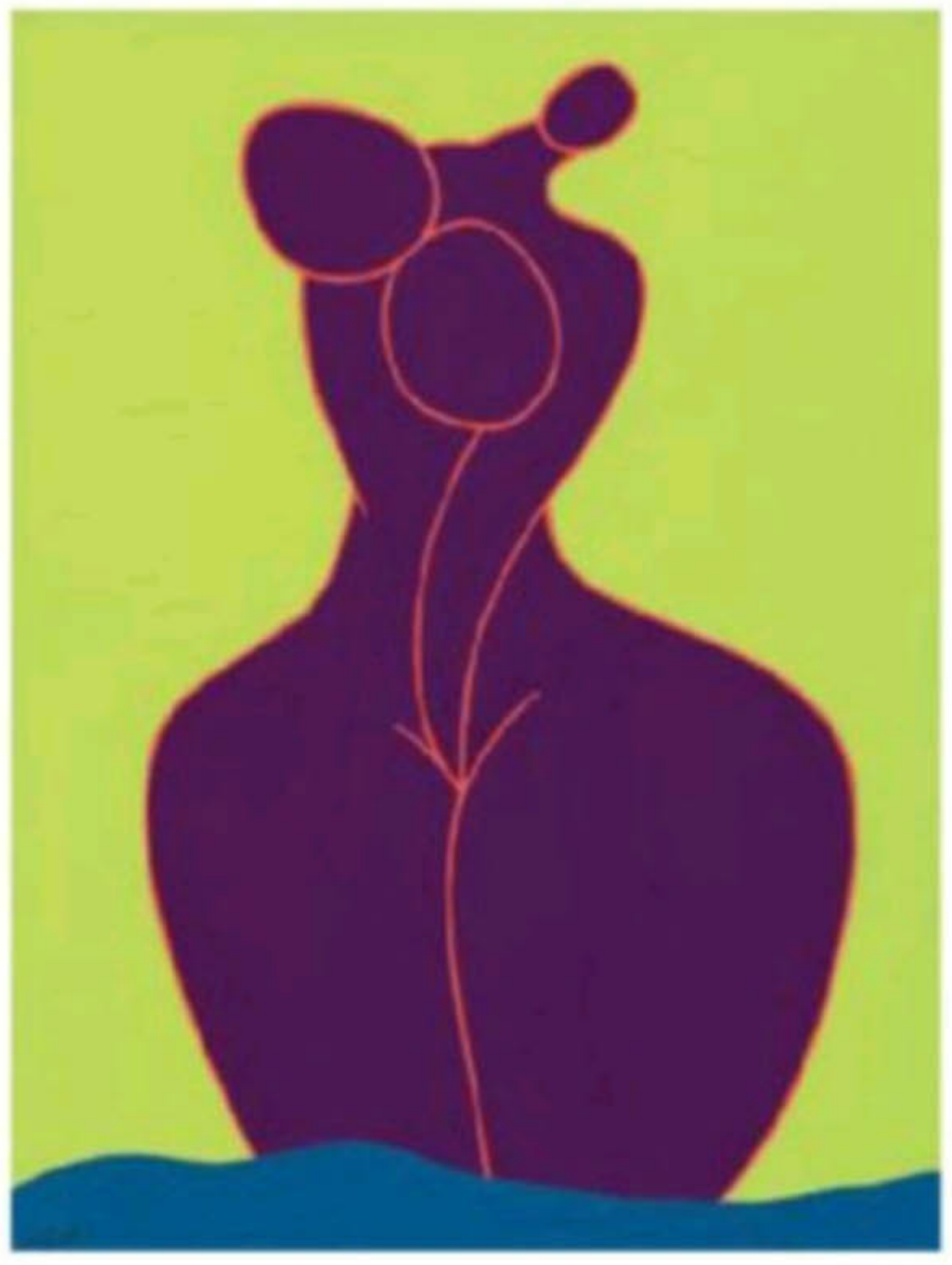
ledoyennerestaurant.com

My Favourite Things:
Calvin Hui

A young art collector and co-founder of London-and-Hong Kong-based 3812 Gallery, Calvin Hui has a deep appreciation for design, spanning from the 20th century to contemporary works. At the home in Hong Kong he shares with his partner, financier Mark Peaker, he has a collection of vintage furniture and silverware, glass art, objects of desire and modern and contemporary artworks from Chinese and British artists. Here are some of his favourite pieces.

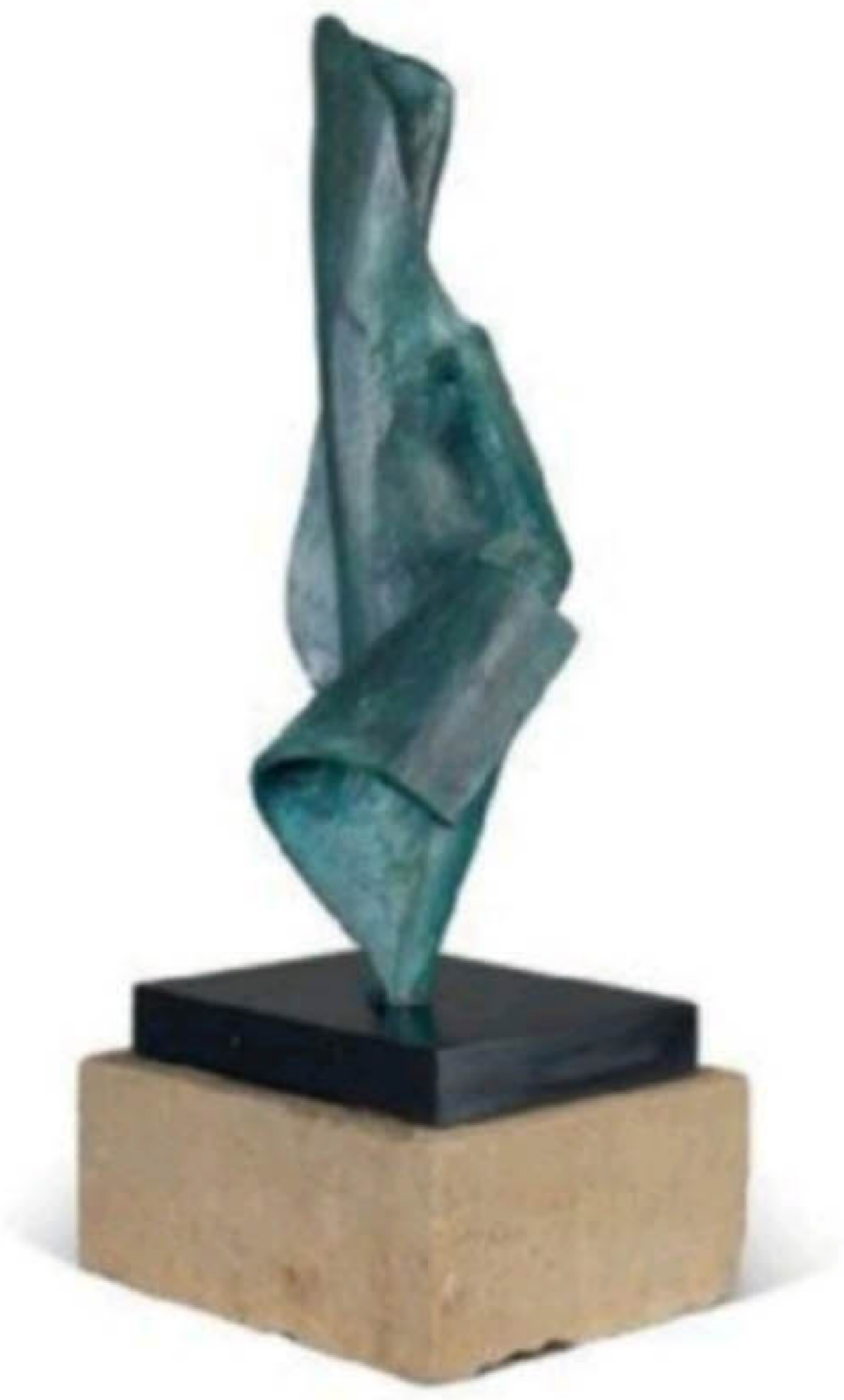
► *Romy Elliott, Portrait of Harry, 2019*
Travelling extensively for work often leaves me missing my beloved dogs back home in Hong Kong. Knowing this, my partner commissioned British artist Romy Elliott to paint a portrait of my dog, Harry, as a Christmas surprise gift. Upon seeing it in our London gallery, I couldn't help but shed tears. Harry passed away in my arms three years ago.



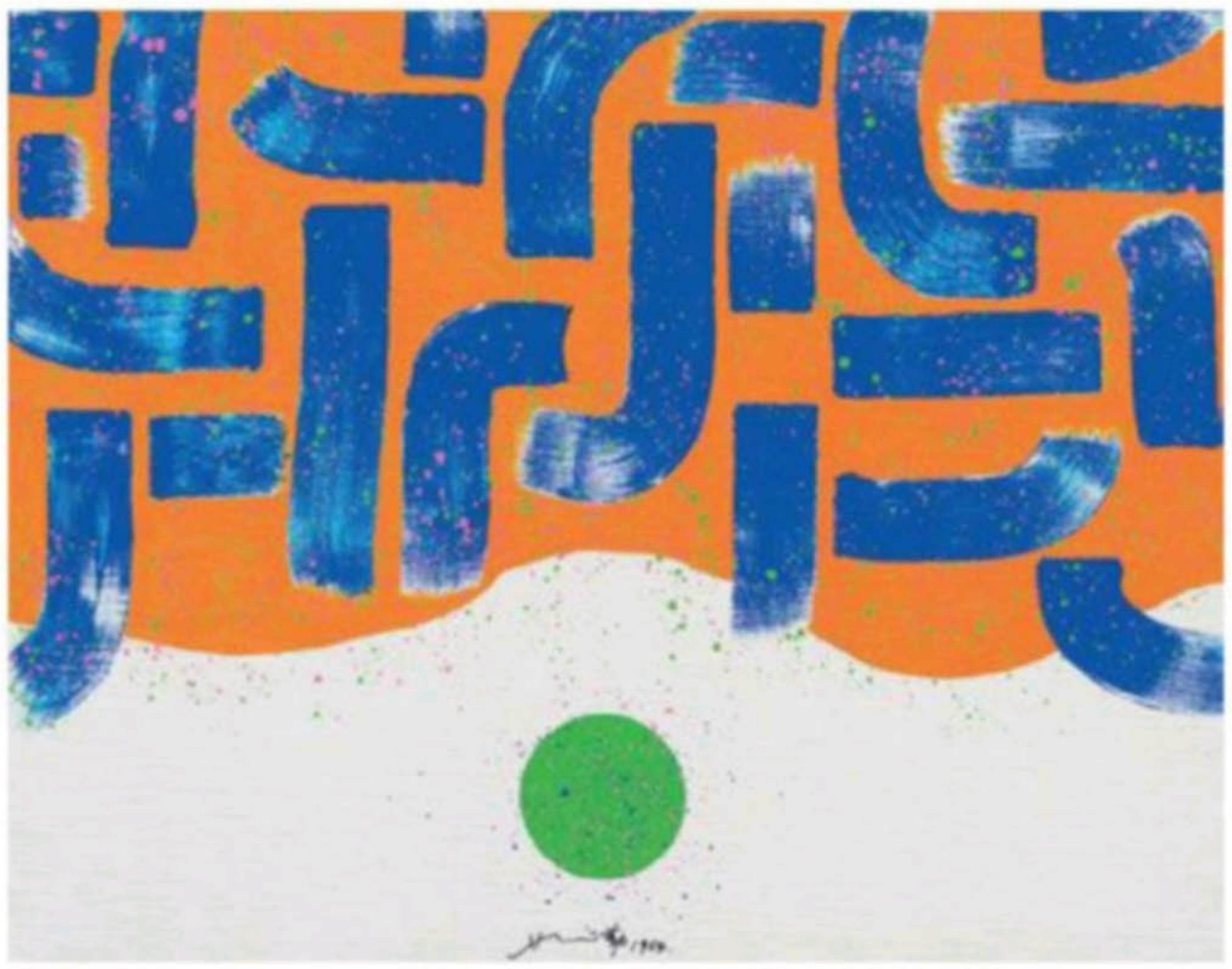


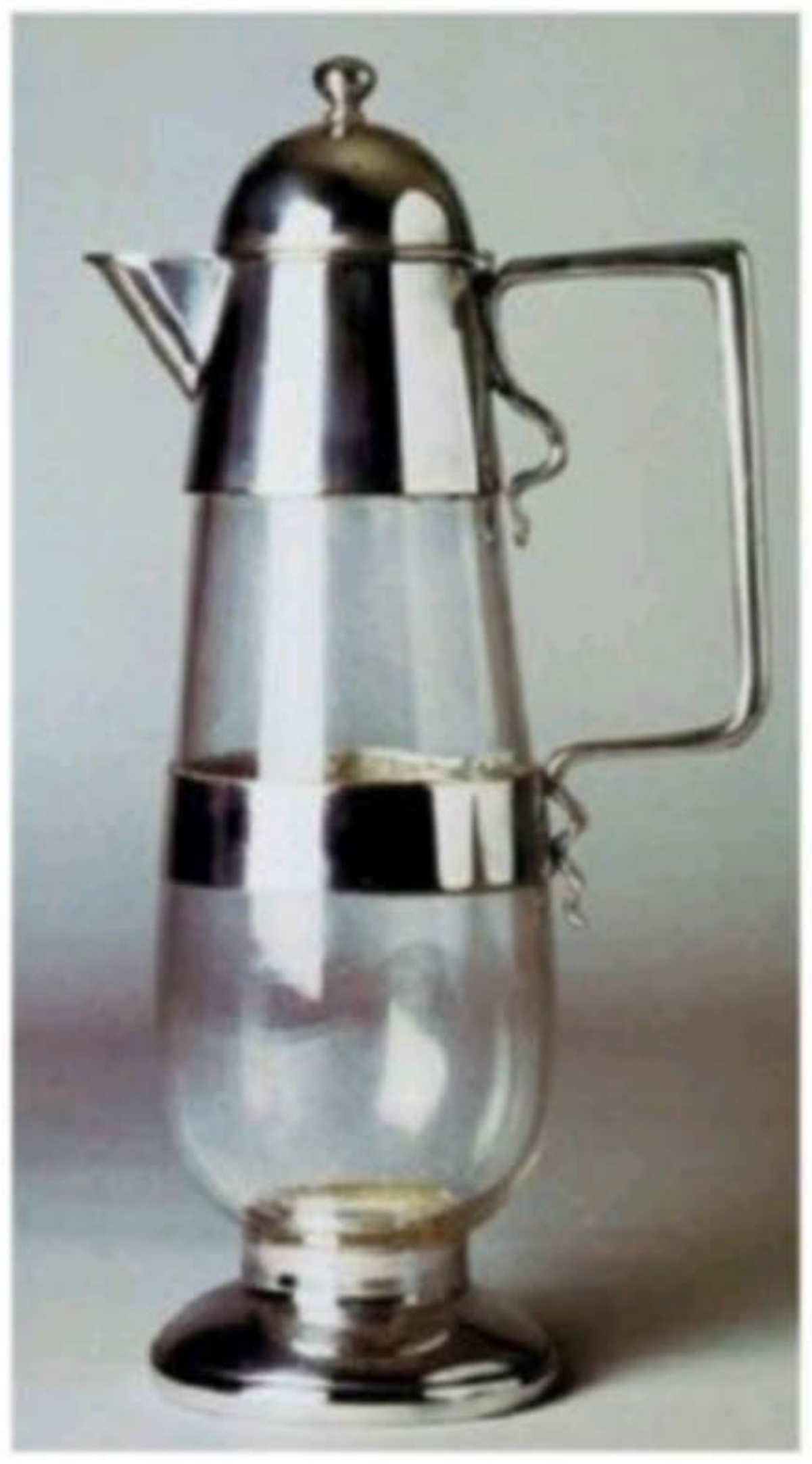
◄ *Ma Desheng, Gazing Ahead of Dawn, 2019*
I have personally known Ma Desheng, a renowned Chinese contemporary artist based in Paris, for 20 years, and the first piece of his 'Rock' painting I collected was two decades ago. The themes he explores are rooted in the enduring wisdom of life. One of my favourite Ma pieces is Gazing Ahead of Dawn.

► *Barbara Hepworth, Vertical Form, 1964, Edition 0/7*
Our visit to the Hepworth Museum in St Ives was transformative, as she is a key figure in British modern art. The Vertical Form, which I acquired at auction, holds great provenance and was a delightful treasure hunt. Now elegantly placed alongside other British artists in our dining room, it enhances our collection beautifully.



▼ *Hsiao Chin, Dancing Light 18, 1964*
I had the privilege of representing Hsiao Chin, a leading post-war abstract master born in Shanghai, who spent over six decades in Milan. He co-founded Movimiento Punto, an art movement in Milan in the 1960s. One of my cherished pieces is Dancing Light 18. The balanced composition and integration of eastern spirit with abstract expressionism make this piece iconic.





◄ *Christopher Dresser, Claret Jug, 1879*
Introduced to Christopher Dresser's works by my partner, we collected this iconic piece from an exhibition in London years ago. Dresser was a pioneer who embraced technological advancements, making silverware accessible to the burgeoning middle class of the early 20th century. The simple geometric form of this piece reflects an era of innovation.

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